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**VOLUME I** 

NUMBER 1

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# THE INDIAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

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October-December 1974

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# PROBLEM OF TRANSITION FROM ANCIENT TO MEDIEVAL IN INDIAN HISTORY

### R. S. Sharma

When, why and how the ancient period ends and the medieval period begins in India is very difficult to say. The advent of the Muslims in India is generally seen as marking the end of the ancient period, and textbooks on ancient Indian history by eminent scholars such as R. D. Banerji, R. C. Majumdar, K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and R. S. Tripathi carry the narrative roughly up to A.D. 1206. This position is based on the British scheme of dividing Indian history into Hindu, Muslim and British periods and is broadly accepted by the Indian History Congress, which brings the section on ancient India to A.D. 1206. But ancient India should not be confused with Hindu India and medieval India with Muslim India. If the establishment of the Muslim rule marks the beginning of medieval India, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Indonesia, etc., will have to be placed in the medieval period and Hindu Nepal in the ancient period. And then what happens to the onset of the medieval age in those countries where the Muslims did not appear as a political force?

Difference in the language of source materials from the 13th century may be adduced as another ground for such a periodization: for political history the Persian sources become more important than the Sanskrit sources. But in all periods—ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary—we notice radically different languages not only in different countries but even in a single country. In the vast sub-continent of India variation in source materials embodied in different languages is all the more marked. If the languages of the sources for modern history are taken into account, we will have to think of more than two dozen periods of modern Indian history at one and the same time. After all, language is the form in which modes of life are expressed; it cannot be considered identical with life.

What criteria, then, have to be adopted in demarcating one period of Indian history from another? Will it be correct to fix the watershed between the ancient and the medieval on the ground of political and dynastic history alone? On the basis of dynastic history several dates such as 646, 712, 750, 916, 985, 1174, 1206 and 1325 have been proposed, but none of these signifies an overall change from the ancient to the medieval. Processes of transition in polity, society, economy and culture take long to fructify and cannot be contained in a single fixed date. We have to find out whether these processes converge on some point.

H. C. Raychaudhuri's Political History of Ancient India ends with the fall of the Gupta empire, but he does not assign any reasons for bringing the ancient period to an end in the sixth century. It may be argued that after the fall of the Gupta empire the political unification of India under one head remained in abeyance for centuries. But this fact does not in itself provide sufficient ground for marking the end of the ancient period. The forcible imposition of the Maurya and Gupta rule over the greater part of our country did not make either the ancient period an age of lasting unification or the medieval period an age of

permanent disintegration. Notwithstanding the seeming political unity under the Mauryas and the Guptas, there are basic differences between the two ages. The Gupta period saw a strong feudalization of the state apparatus which is not to be found in Maurya times. The process was set in motion by the practice of making grants of lands to the brāhmaṇas from the first century A.D. onwards. Although Aśoka's charters are spread all over the country, they do not speak of any land grants. The earliest epigraphic land grants belong to the first century B.C. But these do not transfer administrative power to the beneficiary, which is done for the first time in the grants made to the Buddhist priests by the Sātavāhana ruler Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi in the second century A.D. The land granted to them is described as aprāveśyam (not to be entered by royal troops), anāvamarśyam (not to be molested by government officials) and arāṣṭrasāṃvinayikam (not to be interfered with by the district police).<sup>1</sup>

From the middle of the fourth century A.D. such grants in favour of the brāhmaṇas become frequent. Their two significant features are the transfer of all sources of revenue and the surrender of the police and administrative functions. The grants of the second century A.D. surrender royal control only over salt, which implies that the king retains certain other sources of revenue. But in Berar the Vākātaka princes give up their control over almost all sources of revenue including pasturage, hides and charcoal, mines for the purchase of salt, forced labour and all hidden treasures and deposits.2 More important, the donor abandons his right to govern the people inhabiting the donated villages. In the Gupta period there are at least six grants of villages made by the big feudatories to the brahmanas in which the residents including cultivators and artisans are expressly asked by their respective rulers not only to pay their customary taxes to the donees but also to obey their commands. In two other land grants royal commands are issued to the government officials employed as sarvādhyakṣa and also to regular soldiers and umbrella bearers asking them to leave the brahmanas undisturbed.3 All this is good evidence of the transfer of the administrative power of the state. In the inscriptions of the fifth century A.D. the ruler generally retains the right to punish the thieves, which is one of the main bases of the state power, but in later times he empowers the beneficiaries to punish all offences against family, property, person, etc. Thus the landed beneficiaries are given both powers of taxation and coercion, leading to the disintegration of the central authority.

The fiefs are usually granted till the existence of the sun and the moon, which implies the permanent break-up of the integrity of the state. Although these were conferred on the brāhmaṇas for their religious and spiritual services, they created secure and sacrosanct political pockets not to be disturbed by the royal agents. In all probability secular parties were also granted fiscal rights, although direct evidence is very weak. All told, we have in the Gupta period a polity which is basically different from the Maurya polity. Megasthenes,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> D. C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization, i, 2nd edn (Calcutta University, 1965), 198-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 432-4.

<sup>3 &</sup>quot;Politico-Legal Aspect of the Caste System", JBRS, xxxix, pt. iii (1953), 325.

Books II and III of the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya and the Aśokan inscriptions show that the state officials assessed and collected taxes, levied forced labour, regulated mines, agriculture, etc., and maintained law and order, but all these functions were now step by step abandoned first to the brāhmaṇas and then to others.

Kautilya provides for a census of all the households recording the number of inmates and the amount of property owned by them. The obvious object was to determine the amount of taxable property and to obtain an estimate of the labour power which the state might requisition. From the Gupta period the state shifted at least part of the function of collecting taxes to the feudatories, and was therefore not obliged to maintain a record of households. This can be inferred from the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims in the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. Writing about the conditions in Madhyadeśa, which formed the heart of the Gupta empire, Fa-hsien observes: "They have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules". 1 Similarly Hsüan Tsang writes: "As the government is generous, official requirements are few. Families are not registered and individuals are not subject to forced labour contributions".2 The observations of Fa-hsien and Hsuan Tsang imply that the state bothered neither about the direct collection of taxes from the peasants nor about the strict enforcement of its executive orders. Many of these functions were evidently taken over by the intermediaries between the tillers of the soil and the government; some of these may have been religious beneficiaries and others may have been vassals. In the Gunaighar grant (A.D. 507-8) of Vainyagupta, who was the ruler of a large part of Bengal, his agent Vijayasena, the dūtaka or executor of this grant, is described as mahārāja śrī mahāsāmanta, pāt yuparika and purapāloparika.3 Evidently executive, military and police functions were conferred upon or seized by the feudal vassal. Similar developments seem to have taken place in the same century in northern and western India. The land grants of Harsavardhana associate the titles sāmanta-mahārāja and mahāsāmanta with high-ranking officers. All this gives considerable indication of the feudalization of the state apparatus.4

The post-Gupta period saw a significant change in the mode of payment to government officers. If we rely on the authority of Kautilya, in the Maurya period all the officers of the state from the highest to the lowest were paid in cash, the maximum salary being 48,000 paṇas and the minimum 60 paṇas, although in some cases the paltry salary of 20 paṇas is also mentioned. Payment in cash fits in with the discovery of the largest number of punch-marked coins, mostly silver, belonging to Maurya times. There was no dearth of coins, especially copper, under the Kuṣāṇas, who also initiated the issue of gold coins on a large scale. Therefore the practice of cash payment may have continued. The discovery of a good number of Gupta gold coins shows that high officers may have been paid in cash.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Samuel Beal (tr.), Travels of Fah-hian and Sung-Yun (London, 1869), ch. XVI, p. xxxvii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> T. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (First Indian Reprint, Delhi, 1961), p. 176.
<sup>3</sup> IHQ, vi (1930), 55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For more instances see R. S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism: c. 300-1200 (Calcutta University, 1965), pp. 24-9.

But the Gupta kings issued very few copper coins, and Brhaspati, a lawgiver of the sixth century, recommends reward of services with land. In any case from the time of Harṣa-yardhana public officials were not paid in cash. According to Hsūan Tsang, a fourth part of the royal revenues was earmarked for the endowment of great public servants. The Chinese pilgrim adds that the governors, ministers, magistrates and officers were given portions of land for their personal support.

Landed beneficiaries were faced with the twin problems of cultivation of lands and collection of revenues. I-tsing (seventh century) states that most Indian monasteries possessing lands got them cultivated by servants and others, and adds that they provided the bulls and the fields and generally received one-sixth of the produce.4 He does not clarify whether the cultivators were provided with ploughs, seeds, manures and any other equipment for agriculture. Probably the tillers of the soil were not slaves or wage labourers, as in Maurya times, but semi-serfs who tenanted land on condition of paying a share of their produce to the landlord. Hsüan Tsang describes the śūdras as agriculturists, 5 which suggests that they did not only cultivate the land as they did in the past but also occupied it temporarily. In all earlier sources only the vaisyas are directly described as agriculturists. The earlier Dharmaśāstras, Kautilya's Arthaśāstra and other texts show that the śūdras were mainly landless labourers, engaged in cultivation either as slaves or hired wageearners by the higher classes. Land being the main source of revenue and śūdras being landless, they were not subjected to any taxation by the state. Kautilya speaks of śūdra agriculturists, who were confined to new settlements founded by the state. Apart from Hsüan Tsang, for the first time Asahāya, a legal commentator of the seventh century, describes the śūdras as cultivators. Hence in the seventh century agriculture was carried on not by means of slaves and hired wage-earners, but by giving temporary tenancy to the vast masses of the people, especially the śūdras. This happened in old settled areas in northern India, and can be compared in some respects to the transformation of slaves in Europe into serfs. How and why the śūdra slaves and agricultural labourers were transformed into tenants and agriculturists in Madhyadesa cannot be indicated on the basis of the present literary data, but there does not seem to be any doubt about this revolutionary change.

In the tribal areas agriculturists were placed under the control of the religious beneficiaries, especially the brāhamaṇas, who began to be granted land on a large scale from the fifth-sixth centuries onwards. Although the earliest example of sharecroppers being transferred along with the land can be found in a third century Pallava inscription

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Quoted in Vyavahāramayūkha (tr.) P. V. Kane and S. G. Patwardhan (Bombay, 1933), pp. 25-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Watters, op. cit., p. 176.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> T. Takakusu (tr.), A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipalago by I-tsing (Oxford, 1896), p. 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Watters, op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>6</sup> Comm. to Nāradasmṛti, i. 181.

from Andhra, in backward and mountainous regions such as Orissa, Deccan, etc., from the sixth century sharecroppers and peasants were particularly asked to stick to the land granted to the beneficiaries. 1 The practice later spread to Madhyadeśa, where two seventhcentury charters, forged in the name of Samudra Gupta, ask the artisans and peasants not to leave the village granted to the beneficiaries and migrate to tax-free villages. The custom became fairly common in subsequent times, and the villages transferred to the grantees are called dhana-jana-sahita, janatā-samṛddha, and saprativāsi-jana-sameta.2 All this worked for a closed economy, which was fostered by the decline of trade and commerce.

Trade with the eastern part of the Roman empire ended in the third century and silk trade with Persia and the Byzantium stopped in the middle of the sixth century. Commerce with China and South-East Asia seems to have been mainly in the hands of the Arabs, who monopolized the export trade of India in the pre-Muslim period. While the Arab colonies are found in all parts of the country except Kashmir, the Indian traders are not reported anywhere in Persia and Central Asia, although we hear of Indian settlers in Alexandria in the beginning of the Christian era. The decline of trade for well over 300 years after the sixth century is strikingly demonstrated by the practical absence of gold coins in the country. In Bengal no coins issued by any Hindu prince have been reported between the seventh and 15th centuries.

The decline of trade led to the decay of urban centres which flourished in western and northern India in the kingdoms of the Sātavāhanas and the Kusānas. The towns which were active centres of crafts and commerce in the Sātavāhana dominions began to decay from the fourth century A.D.3 The post-Gupta period proved to be the graveyard of many old commercial cities in northern India. Excavations show that Vaisali, Pāṭaliputra,4 Chirand (Saran district), Rajghat (Varanasi), Kauśāmbī, Śrāvastī, Hastināpura, Mathura, Purana Qila (Delhi),5 and several sites in Haryana and east Panjab generally thrived in the Kuṣāna age, began to decline from the Gupta period and mostly disappeared in post-Gupta times. Evidently on account of the decline of Indian exports, artisans and merchants living in these towns flocked to the countryside and took to cultivation. The decay and disappearance of urban centres created conditions for the rise of self-sufficient regional productive units, which were perpetuated by the political fragmentation of the country and by restrictions imposed on the movement of artisans and peasants.

The rise of the quasi-feudal mode of production modified the varna-divided society. We notice a pronounced tendency to lump together the vaisyas and sūdras in literature from the Gupta period. It seems that in the older settled brāhmanical areas the vaiśyas,

<sup>1</sup> R. S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, pp. 54-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.; Social Changes in Early Medieval India (Delhi, 1969), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> This can be said on the basis of archaeological evidence.

<sup>4</sup> Pāṭaliputra is mentioned as a victory camp of the Pālas, but excavations at Kumrahar have nothing to show between the end of the Gupta and the beginning of the Sultanate period.

Excavations at Purana Qila show a wide occupational gap between the sixth and 10th centuries. For details see my paper "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and Post-Gupta Times" submitted to the Muzaffarpur session of the Indian History Congress, 1972.

who were hitherto mainly freemen possessing land, lost a good deal of their land rights to the feudal lords. On the other hand the śūdras, who were landless labourers, were granted some land and rose in social status. Further, the decline of trade and towns diverted both śūdra artisans and vaiśya merchants to cultivation. In this manner the vaiśyas and śūdras approximated to each other.

This modified brāhmaṇical order spread from Madhyadeśa into Bengal and south India as a result of land grants to the brāhmaṇas, many of them migrating from the north from the fifth-sixth centuries, and naturally provided mainly for the brāhmaṇas and śūdras. Although the Rajputs emerged as a significant factor in the politics and society of northern India from the seventh century, in Bengal and peninsular India their place seems to have been taken by the landed brāhmaṇas. In the older inhabited areas the traditional, theoretical fourfold varṇa system did not fit in with the new feudal and social ranks created by unequal distribution of land and military power. From the sixth century attempts began to square up feudal ranks with ritual ranks. The earlier texts regulate the economic life of the people on the basis of their varṇas. But the Bṛhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira, a work of the sixth century, prescribes varying sizes of houses not only in the varṇa order but also according to the grading of ruling chiefs. This tendency becomes marked in later times in several medieval texts on architecture.

A striking social development from about the seventh century onwards was the proliferation of castes. The Brahmavawarta Purāṇa,¹ a seventh century work, counts 100 castes including 61 castes noted by Manu, but the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa, a text of about the eighth century, states that thousands of mixed castes are produced by the connection of vaiśya women with men of lower castes.² In fact, proliferation affected the brāhmaṇas, the Rajputs, and above all the śūdras and untouchables. Increasing pride of birth, characteristic of feudal society, and the accompanying self-sufficient village economy, which prevents both spatial and occupational mobility, gave rise to many castes. The guilds of artisans which appear in inscriptions from the first century A.D. were gradually hardened into castes for lack of mobility in post-Gupta times. The absorption of the tribal peoples into the brāhmaṇical fold, though as old as Vedic times, was mainly based on conquests. Coupled with the process of large-scale religious land grants, acculturation assumed enormous dimensions and considerably added to the varieties of the śūdras and so-called mixed castes.

From the sixth-seventh centuries started the formation of regional cultural units such as Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Gujarat, Karnatak, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, etc. The Gurjaras, who came in large numbers to India, founded various kingdoms in Rajasthan and Gujarat in the sixth century and paved the way for the formation of the future Gurjaradeśa. Similarly the Rajputs, who emerged as a result of the improvisation of local tribes and the absorption of the Hūṇas and other foreign elements into brāhmaṇical society in the sixth century, cleared the ground for the rise of

<sup>1</sup> Brahmakhanda, x. 14-136.

² ii. 81-2.

Rajasthan. Faint beginnings of regional and culture personality consciousness are found in other parts of the country. Bengal was divided into two main units, Gauda and Vanga, and later the whole region was named after Vanga. The identity of some kind of sub-national groups is recognized by both foreign and indigenous sources. Hsuan Tsang mentions several nationalities. The Mudrārākṣasa of Viśākhadatta speaks of the different regions whose inhabitants differ in customs, clothing and language. The Kuvalayamālā, a Jain text of the eighth century, notes the existence of 18 major nationalities and describes the anthropological character of 16 peoples, pointing out their psychological features and citing the samples of their languages.2 Thus the sixth century seems to have marked a watershed in the ethnic history of India.3

In the history of language and literature the sixth-seventh centuries are equally important. Although Sanskrit continued to be used by the ruling class at the higher administrative levels, in keeping with growing paraphernalia and personal vanity of the landed classes their language became verbose and ornate. The ornate style in prose and poetry came to be widely prevalent and we notice strings of adjectives, adverbs and similes not only in literature but also in inscriptions from about the sixth-seventh centuries. Although the prose style of Bana was not exactly imitated, it did continue to serve as a model for the medieval period.

What is more significant, from this period the Apabhramsa began to differentiate into proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujarati, proto-Marathi, Although it is difficult to fix the beginnings of regional languages, on the basis of the Vajrayāna Buddhist religious writings from eastern India proto-Bengali, proto-Assamese, proto-Oriya, proto-Maithili and proto-Hindi can be traced back to the seventh century.4 Similarly, on the basis of Jain religious Prakrit works proto-Gujarati and proto-Rajasthani are traced back to the same period. The parent stock of languages in eastern India was certainly different from that of languages in western India, but the pace of linguistic variation quickened in the country from the sixth-seventh centuries mainly on account of lack of inter-regional communication and mobility. Contacts were mainly confined to the march of soldiers and migration of monks and brāhmanas from northern India into the peripheral areas for enjoying land grants. The first proved to be ephemeral, but the second produced important consequences. In the tribal areas the brahmanas imposed various forms of Sanskrit on the substratum of the existing Aryan and pre-Aryan dialects. The consequential interaction gave rise to regional languages. The migrating brahmanas from mid-India enriched the vocabulary of the regional languages. They also helped to develop and systematize local dialects into languages through the introduction of writing and eventually the composition of grammar based on Sanskrit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ed Alfred Hillebrandt, pt. i (Breslan, 1912), 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Quoted in Yu. V. Gankovsky, The Peoples of Pakistan (Moscow, 1971), p. 103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Shahidullah holds that some Caryāpadas are as old as A.D.700 (J. Bloch, L' Indo-Aryen, Paris, 1934,

The local element in language was strengthened by the insulation of these areas. On the break-up of the Gupta empire arose several feudal principalities which, in the context of the vast sub-continent, were confined to narrow territorial limits. This naturally hindered countrywide communications. Between the sixth and 10th centuries lack of communication between different regions is also indicated by the decline of both internal and foreign trade, which is shown by the striking paucity of coins in this period. It is therefore evident that top many principalities, little trade, and less inter-zonal communication created congenial conditions for the origin and formation of regional languages from the sixth-seventh centuries.

The emergence of regional languages was paralleled by that of regional scripts. From Maurya to Gupta times the script changed mainly as a result of the passage of time, and an epigraphist who has mastered the Gupta Brāhmī can decipher inscriptions from different parts of the country. But from the seventh century regional variations become so pronounced that one has to learn several scripts to be able to read inscriptions. Obviously the regional script was produced by regional insulation and the availability of the locally educated scribes to meet the needs of local education and administration. The country did not have any wide political authority such as that of the Mauryas, Sātavāhanas, Kuṣāṇas or Guptas to enforce the same script throughout.

In art and architecture ushered in a new age marked by regional styles in sculpture and construction of temples, which became particularly prominent in south India from the eighth century onwards. Although the origin of regional styles from the seventh century is attributed to regional psychology and consciousness, the reasons which operated in the origin and formation of regional languages also applied to this case. However, all over the country the post-Gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy which reflects the pyramidal ranks in society. Viṣṇu, Śiva and Durgā appear as supreme deities, lording over many other divinities of unequal sizes and placed in lower positions as retainers and attendants. The Supreme Mother Goddess is clearly established as an independent divinity in iconography from this time and is represented in a dominating posture in relation to several minor deities. The pantheons do not so much reflect syncretism as forcible absorption of tribal and lower order deities. The reality of unequal ranks appears in the Śaivite, Jain and tantric monastic organizations, in which as many as five pyramidal ranks are enumerated. The ceremonies recommended for the consecration of the ācārya, the highest in rank, are practically the same as those for the coronation of the prince.

The religious rituals and practices underwent important changes from the early centuries of the Christian era. Domestic worship and the  $mahay\bar{a}j\bar{n}as$ , which started with the establishment of private smaller households, secure family property in land and the use of money from about the fifth century B.C., did not hold the ground beyond the second century A.D. Although the Sātavāhana rulers dispensed thousands of  $k\bar{a}rs\bar{a}panas$  as gifts in these sacrifices, in subsequent times this enthusiasm was confined to a few princes and became practically absent in the case of l sser people. On the other hand in accordance with the growing practice of offering and surrendering land, other property and services to the lord and then receiving fiscal rights, land and protection in return as  $pras\bar{a}da$  or favour, there grew the  $p\bar{u}j\bar{a}$  system. With the  $p\bar{u}j\bar{a}$  was interlinked the doctrine of bhakti or

complete self-surrender of the individual to his god, which became a distinctive feature of medieval religion, especially in south India from the seventh century. Bhakti reflected the complete dependence of the tenants or semi-serfs on the landowners in medieval times.

Both pājā and bhakti became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose outside mid-India in the aboriginal, peripheral areas on account of the acculturation of the tribal people through large-scale religious land grants. Brāhmaṇical land rights in the new territories could be maintained by adopting tribal rituals and deities, especially the mother goddess, which eventually produced the tantras. In the fifth-seventh centuries many brāhmaṇas received lands in Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, central India and the Deccan, where tantric texts, shrines and practices appeared about this time. In Tamil Nadu brāhmaṇas settled in numbers from the eighth century, and the Āgamas were compiled from the ninth century. Tantricism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, and from the seventh century continued to hold ground throughout the medieval period. Many medieval manuscripts deal with tantra and astrology, the two being inextricably mixed together.

Magic rituals to fulfil the material desires and to cure the day-to-day diseases and injuries afflicting human beings, animals and physical possessions were as old as the Atharvaveda. But now they were officially sponsored, fostered and distorted by the educated brāhmaṇas and their rich clients. The medieval tāntrika functioned as priest, physician and astrologer. Nobles, chiefs and the richer folk practised occultism for obtaining the elixir of life and gold at a time when the yellow metal was scarce.

Undoubtedly the establishment of the Muslim Turkish rule introduced certain significant changes in the social, economic and political organization of the country. But most features such as feudal state organization, reversion to closed economy, proliferation of castes, regional identity in art, script and language, pujā, bhakti and tantra, which develop in medieval times and continue later, can be traced back to the sixth and seventh centuries. It would then appear that in these two centuries ancient India was coming to an end, and medieval India was taking shape. In these days of specialization no single scholar can identify with equal confidence the mainstreams in the history of society, economy, polity, language, script and religion. The attempt to take a total view of historical trends and to locate their converging point may be considered presumptuous. But the problem has to be faced, and the concept and content of medievalism have to be clarified and its origins understood not in relation to one aspect of Indian life but to all its aspects and to life as a whole.

# ART UNDER FEUDALISM IN INDIA (c.A.D.500-1300)

## Devangana Desai

The period from c. A.D. 500 marks the beginning of a new age in Indian history when certain economic factors played a decisive role in paving the way for a new social and political structure based essentially on the land system. We need not go here into the details of the feudal system as this has been dealt with in other papers of this journal. We will be chiefly concerned here with the socio-cultural aspects of feudalism that influenced the function, nature and character of art in the period. The paper aims to show this influence mainly through the patron class, whose tastes and outlook, interests and demands, changed on account of change in the economic base of society. It attempts to study the treatment of art under feudal conditions and its place in the social values of the period.

Developments which appeared with the feudal mode of production, such as the gradual decline of trade, money economy and commodity production, the decay of urban centres, the rise of local units of production and the more or less self-sufficient village economy, undermined the economic role and social status of the mercantile and commercial class of śreṣṭhūs (bankers) and sārthavāhas (caravan-leaders) and of the urban class or nāgarakas (cultured citizens). The economic, social and political position of a new class of sāmantas, mahāsāmantas, rāṇakas, ṭhakkuras and of various other feudal chiefs was strengthened. The number of feudal chiefs went on multiplying with the crystallization of feudalism after A.D. 650 and more so after A.D. 1000.<sup>2</sup> The ancient religious art at Bharhut, Sanchi, Karle, Kanheri, Junnar, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, etc., was patronized mainly by the mercantile and commercial class, artisan and craft guilds as well as the royal families. But the art of the period from c. A.D. 650 to 1300 was supported mainly by the kings of different principalities, feudatories, military chiefs, etc., who alone could own and donate land to religious institutions.

The rise of the Rajput chiefs, tracing their descent from the sun and the moon, was closely related to the feudal politico-economic structure. The military obligation in the feudal relationship and the granting of land and titles to chieftains were among the factors responsible for the rise of the Rajput clans.<sup>3</sup> They seem to be of mixed origin,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R. S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism: c. 300-1200 (Calcutta University, 1965), pp. 64ff, 76; Light on Early Indian Society and Economy (Bombay, 1966), pp. 84ff; D. D. Kosambi, The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India (Delhi Reprint, 1972), pp. 186, 194-5; R. Thapar, A History of India (Penguin books, 1966), pp. 242ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> R. S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, chapter V; B. P. Mazumdar, The Socio-Economic History of Northern India, (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 9, 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> R. Thapar, op. cit., p. 243.

possibly Hinduized foreigners-Hūnas and Scythians-or Hinduized tribals-Gonds, Bhars, Kharwars, Bhils, etc. Although their mixed or tribal origin has not yet been conclusively proved, it is certain that the Rajput princes and chiefs strove hard to glorify their families and roots. For being accorded a high status in the caste hierarchy they depended upon the support of the priest class, the brāhmaṇas, and their keenness in this regard led to the practice of extensive gifts (dana) to the brahmanas. The Puranas, the Smrtis and other religious literature of the period duly recognize and embody in their behaviour pattern sodaşamahādānas (16 great gifts) which include hiranyagarbha dāna.2 The donor, by the performance of the ceremony of his rebirth through hiranyagarbha (golden womb) and dana to the officiating priests, could attain a high social status. Historical evidence supports the fact that the kings of the leading dynasties from the sixth century onwards performed these ceremonial danas.3 According to R.C. Hazra, 4 new topics in the Puranas from the sixth century A.D. onwards mainly relate to dana to the brahmanas and their worship, tirtha (pilgrimage), sacrifices to the planets and their pacification, vrata (vow), pūjā (worship), etc. Agricultural and seasonal utsavas (festivals) and rites were revived under the Smarta-Paurānic religion. Pūrtadharma, which involved the building of temples, tanks and works of public utility, was emphasized as the highest mode of religion in the Puranas.5 An increase in the importance of purta in the period cannot be gainsaid. In the Upanisads, for instance, parta was meant for fools who go to the lower worlds,6 whereas tapas was the highest virtue. In the Pauranic literature on the other hand the merit accruing through temple-building was considered to be greater than that accruing through the performance of the Vedic sacrifices.7 Partadharma was the dominant ideology behind the large-scale building of temples in this period.

Materially, the condition was ideal for extensive temple-building. Numerous land-owning sāmantas, princes and kings of the period wanted to acquire punya (merit) and fame by building temples and donating land and villages for their maintenance. As R. S. Sharma observes, "There was no dearth of donations because not only the kings and queens but also princes and chiefs possessed their own villages and village folk whom they could dispose of freely". Again, owing to obstructions in trade the surplus wealth of the feudatories and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> V. Smith, The Early History of India, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1914), pp. 340-1, 428; H. H. Risley, The People of India (Calcutta, 1915), p. xx; W. Crooke (ed), Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, i (Oxford, 1920), xxxi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Matsya Purāṇa, 275. 1-23; D. C. Sircar, Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India (Delhi, 1971), pp. 164ff. Dāna was glorified as an important way to piety in the Kali age.

D. C. Sircar, op. cit; D. D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the Study of Indian History (Bombay, 1956), p. 295.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Studies in the Purānic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs (Dacca, 1940), p. 189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> vāpikūpatadāgāni devāyatanāni ca annapradānamārāmāh pūrtadharma ca muktidam, Agni Purāna 209.2; Varāha Purāna, 172. 33; Mārkandeya Purāna, 16. 123-4; Skanda Purāna, 10. 2, 10; P. V. Kane, History of Dharmašāštra v, pt. ii (Poona, 1962), 947ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mundaka Upanişad, i, 2, 10-1.

<sup>7</sup> Agni Purāņa, chapter 38.

<sup>8</sup> Indian Feudalism, p. 59.

kings was not invested in it or in craft production but in conspicuous consumption<sup>1</sup> and the erection of bigger and bigger temples which would proclaim the glory of the patrons.

Meanwhile, another development was taking place. The Smārta-Paurāṇic religion was influenced in its behavioural aspects, i.e., pūjā and vidhis, by the magical elements such as maṇḍalas, yantras, nyāsas, mantras.<sup>2</sup> These magical elements soon became widespread through the patronage given by the feudal class to another powerful, though in its earlier stages less popular, religious movement known as tantricism. From about the fifth century³ tantricism underwent changes in its esoteric and aghori (terrible) practices and from about the 10th century some of the tantric sects, especially the Pāśupatas, were invited by kings of various regions such as Gujarat, Dāhala (in central India), Mysore, Orissa, Kashmir, etc., to head temple organization.<sup>4</sup> There was a general belief that tāntrikas had knowledge of rasāyana (alchemy) and vājīkaraṇa (aphrodisiacs) and had gained mastery over magical lore—ṣaṭkarma, vaṣīkaraṇa, stambhana, etc. These siddhis (achievements) of tantric ācāryas were considered useful by kings and feudal chiefs in serving their two dominant interests, war and sex. Hence the liberal patronage of the tantric ācāryas by the feudal class. The thematic content of the art of the period A.D. 900-1300 was much influenced by tantric beliefs and practices.

Art in the Gupta period (c. A.D. 320-650), when feudal tendencies had just begun to appear, reflects the vitality and zest of renewed brāhmanism which was associated with the emerging socio-economic structure and supported by the rising class of patrons. For the first time in the fourth-fifth centuries temples were constructed in permanent material, stone. This proved a landmark in the history of Indian architecture and would not have been possible without corresponding achievements in architectural methods and techniques. It was also in this period, when artistic techniques and tools were perfected in respect of plastic modelling and from the point of view of visual perception, that sculpture attained a "classical" quality. Progress in technology was combined with lively developments in the field of philosophy (Mahāyāna Buddhism and Yoga), which gave spiritual content to sculpture, as for example in the Buddha images of Sarnath or the Ekamukhī-linga of Khoh. On the other hand local ethnic influence and the ideology of neo-brāhmaṇism were reflected in the sculptured reliefs of Kosam, Deogarh, Besnagar, Pawaya, etc. As Niharranjan Ray puts it, "... they are much less elegant and spiritual, much less refined and luminous, than the products of the Sārnāth School, but more homely and more intimate which is perhaps due to a closer relation with day-to-day life".5 This trend is vividly reflected in the monumental sculptures of Udayagiri near Ujjain, the seat of Gupta power.

<sup>2</sup> R. C. Hazra, op. cit., p. 260; P. V. Kane, op. cit., pp. 1031, 1095.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R. Thapar, op. cit., p. 244; B. P. Mazumdar in Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India, ed, D. C. Sircar (Calcutta University, 1966), p. 71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Gangdhar inscription of the first quarter of the fifth century A.D. refers to tantra and dākinīs, J. F. Fleet, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, ii, 3rd edn (Varanasi, 1970), 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> I have dealt with the spread of tantric sects in different regions of India in my forthcoming book, Erotic Sculpture of India in Its Socio-Cultural Setting, chapter VII (Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., New Delhi).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Section on "Sculpture", The Classical Age, 2nd edn (Bombay, 1962), p. 526.

# Art under Feudalism in India

Although the seeds of decline were present in the economy of the Gupta period, commercial prosperity continued until the end of the fifth century. In the fourth-fifth centuries Vātsyāyana made nāgarakas (and not sāmantas) the centre of his Kāmasūtra, although in his time forced labour and other feudal elements had appeared at the village level. It is this transitional period when the upper classes became richer than before which saw the highest flowering of literature and the visual arts—sculpture, painting and terracottas. The arts patronized by the rich (both the old commercial class and the new feudal lords) reflect aristocratic tastes in their embellishment and in the dignified countenance and elaborate coiffures of both male and female figures. The aristocratic lovers of Badami, Ajanta, Ellora, Deogarh, Nachna, etc., indulging in madhupāna (drinking of wine) or enjoying music and dance, attended by women with chauris or wine jars, certainly betray the feudal outlook of the age. Commenting on the art of Ajanta, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy very aptly says:

Despite its invariably religious subject-matter, this is an art of "great courts charming the mind by their noble routine"; adorned with alamkāras and well-acquainted with bhāva-bheda. The Harṣacarita, Kādambarī, and the works of Kālidāsa and other classic Sanskrit dramatists, and the later Ajanṭā paintings all reflect the same phase of luxurious aristocratic culture.<sup>2</sup>

After the death of Harsa in A.D. 647 political disintegration gave rise to numerous petty states in north India. The collection and consumption of the surplus by the ruling class became more and more diffused and localized. Temples were richly endowed and numerous local centres of art grew up in the period A.D. 650-900, when feudal tendencies were ascendant. The "classical" idiom was now interpreted in terms of the varied local ethnic-cultural background. Local themes and visions predominated the art of this period, though its all-India tradition persisted. The temples at Bhubaneswar in Orissa, Osia in Rajasthan, Aihole and Pattadakal near Dharwar indicate new experiments in the ground plans, sikhara designs, etc. A beginning was made in establishing temples according to regional patterns. In sculpture the images project the emotional experience and ideology of the time and place. Thus the tantric atmosphere pervades the figures of dancers in the Parasuramesvara temple and the fierce forms of gods and goddesses in the Vaitāla temple at Bhubaneswar. In the rock-cut sculptures of Ellora (seventh-eighth centuries) one can feel the fighting mood of the divinities engaged in violent struggles against their enemies.3 The myths embodied in the Purānas and the epics provide new themes.

The art of the period A.D. 900-1300 reflects the cultural impact of feudalism more clearly than that of the preceding periods. Feudal and regional tendencies reached their climax in this period. The feudal atmosphere encouraged traditionalism and conventionalism. Canons of silpa and painting were written in textual form from the late

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> ed, G. D. Shastri (Banaras, 1929), v. v. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> History of Indian and Indonesian Art (Delhi Reprint, 1972), p. 90 and fn.

N. Ray, Idea and Image in Indian Art (Delhi, 1973), pp. 83ff.

Gupta period onwards. The Purāṇas such as the Viṣṇudharmottara, Agni, Matsya, etc., also had chapters on vāstu and śilpa. The artisans were expected to follow strict canonical dictates as regards the choice of the site, design and construction of the shrine, carving of the images, etc. From about the 10th century art was governed mainly by the canons of various regional schools. Significantly, temple architecture reached its perfection despite these limitations. The Kandariya Mahādeva temple built at Khajuraho in central India in A.D. 1025-50 represents the highest achievement of the Nāgara style of Jejākabhukti school. The Lingarāja temple erected about A.D. 1060 at Bhubaneswar is among the best examples of the Orissa school, the other being the Sūrya temple at Konarak built about A.D. 1250. Similarly, the Nīlakaṇṭheśvara temple at Udayapur built in the middle of the 11th century is a good example of the Malwa school. Each regional school, though influenced to a certain extent by extraneous trends, exhibited a fixed architectural conception and structural design, and variations were possible only within this framework.

Sculptural motifs were thoroughly subordinated to the regional architectural pattern. I will briefly cite here from my empirical survey of one of the sculptural motifs—the erotic motif-to show how regional patterns had conditioned its depiction in medieval art.2 The erotic motif was originally a fertility symbol and considered to be auspicious in early art tradition; it was accepted in the art of temples as an auspicious alamkāra, magico-religious in function. But its place and assignment in the temple's architectural scheme was determined by the respective regional schools. For instance, the Jejākabhukti school (Khajuraho) and the Orissa school permitted it on the janghā, the main wall of the temple. The size of the motif was in its turn determined by its assignment in the architectural scheme. In the temples of the above two schools the motif could be large and distinctly visible to pilgrims. In the temples of Gujarat and Mysore on the other hand the erotic motif could never be portrayed on the janghā. In the Mysore temples of the Hoysala school it is invariably confined to the kakṣāsana (the sloping balustrade of the balcony) and to a small decorative band on the basement, whereas in the Gujarat temples it is generally shown on the kakṣāsana, narathara row on the plinth, kumbha row above the plinth, on pillars and on lintels. Though often more obscene than those of the Orissa and Khajuraho temples, erotic figures of Mysore and Gujarat escape the notice of pilgrims. The thematic content or type of relationship portrayed in the motif is also to some extent determined by the regional pattern.

Numerous figures appear on the surface of the temple, but their grouping is thoroughly disintegrated. They "are juxtaposed in relation to space but are not inherently related with one another by psychological and narrative ties". Animals, vegetal and abstract designs and even human figures had their role in temple art as merely decorative figures, alamkāras. This reminds us of Arnold Hauser's observations on European feudal art:

Stella Kramrisch (Art of India, 3rd edn, London, 1965, p. 44) refers to regional schools between the ninth and 13th centuries.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D. J. Desai, op. cit., chapters IV, V.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> N. Ray, Section on "Sculpture" in The Struggle For Empire (Bombay, 1957), p. 645.

Not only the animals and the foliage but also the human figures fulfil an ornamental function in the total pattern of the church; according to the space to be filled up, they are bent and twisted, stretched or reduced in size. The subservient role of the detail is emphasized so strongly that the frontier between free and applied art, between sculpture and mere decoration, remains fluid.<sup>1</sup>

Medieval art of India presents human figures, especially female forms, in all their different attitudes and bodily contortions, but they do not have any sculptural individuality, except perhaps for a few examples at Konarak. There are, of course, a few good female figures known as surasundarīs at Jagat in Rajasthan and in some of the early temples at Khajuraho and Bhubaneswar, but these also are part of the architectural scheme. Sculpture gets prominence in the Hoysala temples of Mysore and architecture becomes sculptural, but here ornateness carried to its baroque extreme results in lifeless sculptures with the forms being devoid of vitality.

The female figures represent nāyikās in their different emotional moods (bhāvas) of abhisārikā or vāsakasajjikā (decorating herself for meeting her lover). These, however, are not nāyikās of such ancient poets as Hāla and Amaru whose poetic imagery is reflected in the older art of Nagarjunakonda, but are frozen nāyikās who follow the dictums of Śāstras. They do not move us. The portrayal of tantric ācāryas in relations with women and often in aristocratic company fascinated the feudal patrons to such an extent that almost all the temples that portray erotic motifs after A.D. 900 have this theme in their art. War scenes and hunting parties also appear in temples, but these are confined to smaller rows of sculpture. Portrait sculpture was not much prevalent in early Indian history except under the Kuṣāṇas. In the medieval period, however, we have sculptured reliefs depicting kings, possibly donors. Thus the king is shown sitting in his court in the Belur temple and giving dana, practising archery, sitting in the swing amidst harem women, etc., in the Konarak temple. Here the royal figure is invariably shown big and the rest of the figures decreasing in size according to their hierarchical position. More gods and goddesses appear in art. But they are not simple forms of Siva as Nataraja or Devi as Mahiṣāsuramardinī of the earlier art. The new gods and goddesses were connected with the numerous tantric cults that were coming to the fore and had their iconography in the dhyānamantras of tantric texts. Their visual forms had to conform to rigid iconographical formulae. Even the slightest variation would result in the loss of the magical efficacy of the icon. Canonization became the rule.

The result is the ossification of form and spirit. With increasing demand for sculptural decoration the quality further deteriorated. Referring to the cult images, Niharranjan Ray writes:

A procession of endless monotony of form, uninformed by any inner experience and without any registration of individual creative genius, meets the eye. It is only in rare instances that images were expressions of the artist's creative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Social History of Art (London, 1962), p. 169.

genius and attained high artistic standards. But such examples are few and far between.<sup>1</sup>

This is also true of non-iconic figure sculptures which were more or less standardized according to regional patterns.

The medieval conception of form changes from the fully rounded plasticity of classical Indian sculpture to "summarising the rounded volume in the direction of flat surface and linear angles;...compositions tend to become linearised with emphasis on sharp angles. horizontals, verticals, and diagonals".2 This trend is, however, not seen consistently in all regions at the same time. But sooner or later medieval art moves in this direction and by about the 12th-13th centuries the artistic creativity is completely exhausted in most of the art-regions except in Orissa where it flickers for some time in the grand temple at Konarak. In the Deccan, which had produced the great art of Ellora and Elephanta in the feudal period art shows signs of decadence except perhaps in an isolated example of the Ambernath temple near Bombay erected in A.D. 1060, which has some fine sculptures. The Gondeśvara temple at Sinnar built by a feudatory chief in the 12th century is a clear example of the relative superiority of architecture to sculpture. In the Gujarat school ornateness was indulged in to its extreme. This is evident from the supposedly good temple at Modhera, built in A.D. 1027 immediately after the devastating raid of Mahmud of Ghazni and the 13th-century fort wall at Dabhoi near Baroda. The very notion of decorating the fort wall, the function of which is to protect and guard the town, was indeed of feudal taste and origin. Even the tanks and wells were ornately decorated by the royal family of Gujarat.

Kings of numerous principalities lived in the world of artificial greatness and exalted titles. Bards and court-poets sang the invented glory of their patrons in bombastic words, describing the king as the ideal hero. To satisfy their inflated ego and the appetite for fame and glory the aristocratic and royal families of the period competed with each other in building large and magnificent temples. Every king or chieftain wanted to excel his ancestor or neighbour in this regard. It is said that the Ganga king Narasimhadeva I, who built the majestic temple of Konarak, aimed at building a temple surpassing in height the great temple at Puri. In its construction he spent 12 years' revenue. In keeping with the spirit of the times, inscriptions generally use figurative expression in describing the temples. The Khajuraho inscription of the Laksmana temple, built in A.D. 954, says that Yasovarman Candella, who was then a mere feudatory of the Pratiharas and not even an independent ruler, "erected this charming splendid home (of Visnu)...which rivals the peaks of the mountains of snow, the golden pinnacles of which illumine the sky".3 The Gurgi inscription from the Cedi territory notes the erection of a Siva temple "which aspired to be as high as the peak of the Sumeru mountain, was famous on the earth, caused wonder in the three worlds and acted like a stair-case to his (donor's) fame

<sup>1</sup> Section on "Sculpture" in The Struggle for Empire, p. 643.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 641.

<sup>3</sup> Epigraphia Indica, i, 134, verse 42.

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marching towards heaven". The Ittagi (Mysore) inscription of the 12th century refers to a feudal chief building a temple which was the cakravartin<sup>2</sup> among temples.

The large number of villages donated to the temple, "the house and body of god", by royal and aristocratic families converted it into a wealthy feudal organization<sup>3</sup> wielding considerable influence in economic and social life. According to the *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*, the heads of temples demanded certain luxuries from the donors, and probably their tastes and demands were taken into consideration in the construction and decoration of temples. The god himself was treated as a thakkura, especially in eastern India, and was provided with a bhogamaṇḍapa (hall for offerings) and a naṭamaṇḍapa (hall for dance). With these new accessories the temple further increased in size and proportion and rivalled the palaces of kings and feudatories, proud descriptions of which are available, though the monuments have perished, in the Samarāngāṇasūtradhāra, Mānasāra, Mānasollāsa, etc.

The function of art in feudal society was to impress and dazzle the audience or the onlooker and to proclaim the glory, might and riches of opulent patrons. Though apparently in the service of religion, it was actually the means of gratifying their aspirations for fame and glory. Art succeeded in this function of glorification and therefore failed in conveying higher qualities, feelings and values.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. xxii, 133, verse 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xiii, 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> R. S. Sharma, Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, p. 150; Buddha Prakash, Aspects of Indian History and Civilization (1965), p. 225.

<sup>4 (</sup>Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1901), p. 26.

### IMMOBILITY AND SUBJECTION OF INDIAN PEASANTRY IN EARLY MEDIEVAL COMPLEX

B. N. S. Yadav

The restrictions on the mobility of peasants and other humble folk and their subjection under the conditions characterized by closed, local economy, and the emergence of landed intermediaries and a hierarchy of ruling landed aristocracy are well known ingredients of feudalism1 as a wider concept. On this point a wide range of epigraphic evidence together with the Chinese accounts and some contemporary texts pertaining to the Indian context have recently been examined by R.S. Sharma.2 The practice of transferring all the cultivators of a village has been traced by him to the sixth century A.D. in the backward areas of Orissa and the neighbouring regions of central India.3 In the 11th and 12th centuries some inscriptions not only from these regions but also from Assam, Bengal (Sena grants), Bihar, Bundelkhand (Candella grants), Rajasthan, Maharashtra and the hill state of Camba mention, individually or collectively, peasants and in some cases artisans and even merchants and village attendants along with the lands or villages donated by rulers to religious institutions and brāhmaṇas.4 We also notice some secular grants of this nature5.

The inscriptions are not explicit about the curbs on the movement of peasants, artisans, etc., and their subjection. This has led some scholars to conclude that "to give a village is really the same as to give a village along with the villagers which means that the king's rent paying subjects in the villages should henceforth pay taxes to the donee".6 It has been argued that the mention of peasants, artisans, etc., in connection with the gift of a village indicates neither any constraint on their movement nor their state of dependence and that this only shows that some of them were slaves and others enjoyed state land or common village land as village attendants or followed occupations the revenues from which were a state monopoly.7

The Purāna, Dharmaśāstra and other classes of contemporary literature clarify and supplement the information obtained from the epigraphs. The Skanda Purana, which

<sup>2</sup> Indian Feudalism: c. A.D. 300-1200 (Calcutta University, 1965).

4 R. S. Sharma, op. cit., pp. 231ff.

7 Ibid. pp. 61f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the various standard definitions and the essential elements of feudalism see J. W. Hall, Comparative Studies in Society and History, v, no. 1 (1963), 16ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 55. The trend of peasant subjection had, however, started a few cetnuries earlier, "Some Aspects of the Changing Order in India During the Saka-Kuṣāṇa Age", Kuṣāṇa Studies (Department of Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology, Allahabad University, 1968).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> For example, the Candella inscription of the time of Kirtivarman refers to the grant of a village along with the people to Jajuka of the Vāstavya family, EI, xxx, no. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> D. C. Sircar (ed), Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India (Calcutta University, 1966), p. 61.

may be attributed to the period from about the eighth-ninth centuries A.D., to the 13th provides interesting sidelights. It gives a long description of a legendary grant<sup>1</sup> of a number of villages along with 36,000 vaisyas as well as sūdras four times that number made in times of yore by king Rāma to 18,000 brāhmanas after the performance of certain religious rites. The vaisyas and sūdras were evidently intended to serve the donees,2 who later divided the villages amongst themselves. Rāma enjoined the people so transferred to obey the commands of the donees and to serve them devotedly.3 He further declared that a śūdra serving them with humility would become prosperous and attain heaven and one deflecting from this course of conduct would fall a prey to poverty.4 The Yavanas, Mlecchas, Paityas or Rākṣasas creating any kind of obstruction to the donees were threatened with getting burnt to ashes.5 The story further runs that in the Kali age the descendants of the donees were deprived of their estates by king Kumārapāla, a follower of Jainism, who is said to have been the lord of Brahmāvarta.6 The brāhmanas made a complaint against Kumārapāla to king Āma,7 the father-in-law and probably also the overlord of Kumārapāla, who resided at Kānyakubja, but they could not succeed in getting back their villages with his help. At last some of them went to Setubandha Rameshvara to seek the assistance of Hanumat. While explaining their distress to this god, they claimed the right not only to the villages donated to their ancestors by Rāma, but also to the people<sup>8</sup>—vaisyas and sūdras whose ancestors had been transferred along with the donated villages. With the help of Hanumat they succeeded in prevailing upon the king to grant them a number of villages along with the śūdras known as adhabija who were attached to them for rendering service. The śūdras who served the dvijas with devotion and refrained from Jainism are here regarded as uttama. 10 As against this, those śūdras and also vipras who violated the instruction were, as the expression pratibandhena yojitāh11 suggests, tied down to the set-up emerging as a result of the village grant. The ideal course of conduct prescribed for the śūdras and vaiśyas was to render services and pay dues12 to the grantees and not to leave or transfer allegiance from them. 13

¹ tesām śuśrūsanārthāya vaiśyānrāmo nyavedayat sattrimsacca sahasrāni śūdrāmstebhyaścaturgunān, Skanda Purāna (Brahmakhanda), 3.3.35. 44ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The donees claimed lordship or proprietary rights (svāmyam) over the villages which they lost when they were dispossessed of them (labdhaśāsanakā viprā luptasvāmyā aharniśam, Ibid. 3.2.36.47).

<sup>3</sup> viprājāā nollamghanīyā sevanīyā prayatnatah, Ibid. 3.2.35.56.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 3.2.35.57f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. 3.2.35.58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. 3.2.36.59, 183.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Āma has been identified as king Āmarāja, son of king Yasovarman of Kanauj, who flourished in the eighth century A.D., D. C. Sircar, Bhāratīya Vidyā, Bombay, vi (1945), 237-40; viii (1947), 102f; Studies in the Society and Administration of Ancient and Medieval India, i (Calcutta, 1967), 153f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The descendants of the vaisyas and śūdras, originally transferred by Rāma, are enumerated in detail.

<sup>9</sup> Skanda Purāṇa, 3.2.38.48.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 3.2.38.60. Apparently by becoming the followers of Jainism and other heretical religions the śūdras became somewhat refractory.

<sup>11</sup> ye ca pākhandaniratā rāmaśāsanalopakāh sarve viprāstathā śūdrā pratibandhena yojitāh, Ibid. 3.2.38.61.

<sup>12</sup> The persons attached to the donces are called vṛttidāḥ and sevāsu tatparāḥ. 13 Ibid. 3.2.40.59-60.

Social consciousness can hardly be regarded as completely divorced from social being and as such this story may reflect the actual conditions prevailing in many estates held by the priestly beneficiaries. Clearly the śūdras as also the vaiśyas who were transferred1 and attached to the donees were not slaves; nor were all of them village attendants. The relation of dependence involving lifelong services and payment of dues to the donces appears to have been thought of as continuing from generation to generation. Further, although in seeking to impose restrictions on mobility religious sanction was invoked, the expression pratibandhena yojitah suggests resort to some forcible methods in this respect.

There is ample evidence to conclude that the śūdras were largely peasants during the period c. A.D. 600-1200,2 although some sections practised industrial arts and crafts as well as other vocations. It has been held3 that the transformation of śūdras who were mainly slaves and hired labourers in the earlier age into peasants was a significant phenomenon from the point of view of the emergence of feudalism in India. The tendency of levelling the vaisyas down to the status of the śūdras, traces of which may be found in the earlier age, had acquired considerable proportions during this period.4

Medhātithi (ninth century) reiterates the theory of the general dependence of the śūdras on members of the higher varnas and as a corollary lays emphasis on the confinement of the śūdras to the locality of their masters. This naturally envisages restrictions on their migration, which could only strengthen the hands of the landed intermediaries and ruling chiefs in keeping peasants and other working folk under subjection. Thus commenting on a verse of the Manusmṛti he states:5

Inasmuch as the service of the twice-born constitutes the duty of the śūdra, it follows as a matter of course that the latter should reside in their locality and continue to obtain his living by serving the twice-born on whom he is dependant. In case the śūdra has a large family or becomes unfit for service, to acquire wealth he may go and live in any other country except where the Mlecchas are in a majority.

However, Medhātithi elsewhere recognizes the right of a śūdra possessed of wealth to freedom from dependence on the men of higher varnas.6

<sup>1</sup> The terms dattāh, pradattāh, nirūpitāh, etc., are used for the transfer of the vaiśyas and śūdras in the literary texts, but in inscriptions we generally find the prefix sa used with the names of the groups of people mentioned along with the donated lands or villages.

<sup>2</sup> For cultivation (kṛṣi) as the duty of the śūdras see Laghu Āśvalāyana, 22.5; Vṛddha Hārīta, 7.181; Narasiṃha Purāṇa, 58.11 (also quoted in the Gṛhasthakāṇḍa of Lakṣmīdhara, p. 273); Bṛhaddharma Purāṇa, Bibliotheca Indica edn, p. 189, v. 8. Cf. Mahāpurāṇa of Jinasena, 17.164. Not only Hsüan Tsang (On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, 1st Indian edn, Delhi, 1961, p. 169), but also Ibn Khurdadbeh (Elliot and Dowson, History of India as told by Its own Historians, i, London, 1866, 16f) and al-Idrisi (Ibid. p. 76) attest the practice.

<sup>3</sup> R. S. Sharma, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> E. C. Sachau (ed and tr.) Alberuni's India, i (London, 1910), 101.

5 śūdrasya dvijātiśuśrūṣāyā vihitatvātāddeśanivāse sarvadā prāpte tatrājāvato deśāntaranivāso bhyanujūāyate. Yadā bahukutumbatayā susrūsāsaktyā vā'yam dvijātimāsritah sa enam bibhryāt. tadā desāntare sambhavati dhanārjane nivaset. tatrāpi na mlecchabhūyisthe..., Medhātithi's Comm. on Manu, ii. 24.

<sup>6</sup> yadi śūdro vidyamānadhanah svātantryeņa jīved brāhmaņādyanapāśrito na jātu dusyet, G. N. Jha (ed), Medhātithi

Immobility and Subjection of Indian Peasantry in Early Medieval Complex

The bondage of the śūdras may be seen in a religious ideology which acquired considerable force during the early medieval period. In spite of the fact that they were allowed to endow tanks, wells, feeding houses, orchards, etc. (pūrtadharma)1 and to acquire merit, Medhātithi² denied them the right to liberation, the reward of the fourth āśrama, on the ground that they could function only as householders (grhastha) and acquire merit by serving the twice-born and procreating offspring. In the 11th century Albertuni noticed such an attitude not only towards the śūdras but also towards the vaiśyas,3 though he referred to others who did not subscribe to this view.4 In fact, such a disability was not contemplated in the realm of higher philosophy.

The Jains used to attack the caste system, but according to the Yasastilaka (10th century) of Somadeva Suri the orthodox section among them had developed the notion that the śūdras were not entitled to religious initiation.<sup>5</sup> The denial of the right to spiritual liberation to the śūdra may be regarded as a reflection of his earthly subjection. However, by the 11th and 12th centuries there had come into prominence a number of religious orders of the tantrikas and others which recognized the śūdra's right to liberation.

We get some idea of the condition of peasants and other working people in the estates and territories of chiefs and rulers. A verse from the Nāradasmṛti,6 quoted with approval in the Rajadharmakanda of Laksmidhara (12th century), conceives of the subjects depending for their means of livelihood on the ruler as having been purchased by him with the power of his tapas or austerities and enjoins them to be subservient to his command. Here the political unit is thought of as a community of dependants functioning under constraints. The explanation of the term varta as agriculture, cattle-rearing, etc., by Laksmidhara and the omission of trade which formed its essential element in the ancient texts in this context suggests the predominance of the agrarian set-up.

In the Bauddhadohā (Caryāpada 12) citta immersed in ignorance, which is the source of bondage, is called thakkura,8 a well-known title of the ruling landed aristocracy from the 10th century onwards. In the Upamitibhavaprapancakatha (beginning of the 10th century) too, in which the feudal hierarchy is clearly reflected, the bondage of samsāra is compared

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Agni Purāna, 209.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> On Manu, vi. 97; Kane, History of Dharmaśāstra, ii, pt. i (Poona, 1941), 163. In this context we find the expression mokṣaṃ varjayittvā. The idea that the service of the higher class cannot bear the fruit of liberation for śūdra is found in the Santi Parva (63. 12-4) also.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Sachau, op. cit., p. 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Yaśastilaka (Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, 1916), viii, Section 43; cf. K. K. Handiqui, Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture (Sholapur, 1949), p. 331.

<sup>6</sup> tapah krītāh prajā rājňah prabhurāsām tathānrpah, tasmāttadvacasi stheyam vārtā tāsām tadāśrayā, Rājadharma-kāṇḍa, p. 5; also K. Sambasiva Sastri (ed), Nāradīya-Manusamhtā, 18.23. In another verse of the Nāradasmrti the relation between the king of the subjects is equated with that between husband Naradasmrti the relation between the king and his subjects is equated with that between husband and wife. The old idea that the king is a servant receiving one-sixth part of the produce as his salary (vetana) is also repeated at one place in the text.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> vārtā kṛṣipaśupālyādivṛttiḥ, Rājadharmakāṇḍa, op. cit.

<sup>§</sup> thakkuramavidyācittam, Nagendranatha Upadhyaya, Tāntrika Bauddha Sadhanā aur Sāhitya [in Hindi] (Nagari Pracarini Sabha, Kasi, Savmat 2015), p. 324.

with the estate of a chief or ruler. Some verses of this text suggest that the miserable people living in the principality of a ruler were dependant upon him for their means of subsistence and only death could take them out of the closed set-up and liberate them from servitude. In spite of an element of exaggeration in the allegory, the reality cannot be missed.

The subjection of the peasants is implied in a verse of the Brhannāradīya Purāna (ninth century), which refers to men attached to the plough (baddhahālaih)2 for carrying on cultivation and speaks of the decline of agriculture in the Kali age. A model document for bhumisamsthu in the Lekhapaddhati3 is also significant in this context. A form of charter (gunapatra) to be granted by a  $r\bar{a}n\bar{a}$  to the inhabitants of the villages of a region, it asks the peasants (kutumbīkas) living in the huts to cultivate the fields recorded in the registers against their names (nibandhabhāmi), to suffer some penalty if they keep any part uncultivated and to render dues and services according to local customs,4 including the payment of part of the produce to local officials, village artisans, 5 etc. It provides for the supply. of the seeds of rice, wheat, barley, cinā and lāta from the barnyard or the threshing floor, the procurement of the other seeds being the responsibility of the peasants. The peasants are required to carry two-thirds of the grain to the chief's granary as his share and allowed to have the remaining one-third and the grass for themselves. A peasant found stealing grain is to be warned once, but if he persists he is to be deprived of his share of the produce and, finally, to be turned out of the village. Complaints of peasants are to be entertained not individually, but only when four of them go together with the gunapatra. The fields, grain, cattle and other property of a peasant who leaves the village and moves away elsewhere are to be taken over by the chief or ruler.6

The exploited and dependant peasantry here represents a type of sharecroppers<sup>7</sup> who were entitled to only one-third of the produce. All this may be taken to have been a local practice in western India and Rajasthan, for the text reflects the conditions of these regions. But the practice of sharecropping becoming widely prevalent during this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Upamitibhavaprapañcakathā, pp. 647-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> saritīre baddhahālairvapayişyanti cauṣadhīh, alpam alpam phalan teṣām bhaviṣyanti kalau yuge, Bṛhannāradīya Purāṇa, 38.43. Hazra's translation of the term baddhahāla as "men with set ploughs" (Studies in the Upapurāṇas, i, Calcutta, 1958, 332) does not appear to be convincing. For this rendering of the term I am indebted to my friend and colleague, Dr S. N. Roy of the Department of Ancient History, Culture and Archaeology, Allahabad University.

<sup>3 (</sup>Gaekwad Oriental Series, Baroda, 1925), xix, 18f.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 19.

We find the mention of five artisans (pañcakāruka) who may be the carpenter, the ironsmith, the potter, the barber and the washerman (Ibid. p. 108).

anyatra pranaiyagatakutumbikasya kṣetrakhalakadhaura-prabhṛti sarvam rājakule svādhīnam kartavyam, Ibid. p. 19. To threaten a fugitive with confiscation was one of the methods adopted by the lords in feudal Europe to prevent the migration of their subjects. They tried to retain their peasants, for under the condition of closed agrarian economy it was useless to have an estate without labour to work it. But owing to the fragmentation of authority and the abundance of virgin soil, especially in certain regions of France, it was difficult to prevent desertions. Marc Bloch, Feudal Society, i (London, 1965), 263.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The term kutumbika here appears to mean the sharecropper. The same meaning of the word kutumbī is found in the commentary of Medhātithi on Manu, iv. 253.

period is clear from many pieces of evidence and, above all, from the fact that the  $\bar{a}rdh\bar{u}ka$  (sharecropper) is mentioned for the first time as a separate mixed caste in the  $Par\bar{a}\acute{s}arasmrt\bar{\iota}^1$  (c. A.D. 600-900).

The form of document under consideration has been assigned a late date (Samvat 1407) in the text,2 but it represents an earlier tradition. The evidence of Lekhapaddhati may be put alongside that which we find in the Adi Purana of Jinasena (ninth century), which also reflects the condition of the same region. The Adi Purana asks the ruler to protect and give subsistence to his subjects like a gopālaka to his cattle.3 It is recommended that just as a herdsman grazes his cows in a rich pasture and then milks them for his own purpose, the ruler should also carry on cultivation in the bhaktagrāmas through the karmāntīkas by providing them with seeds and by making other efforts.4 The assignment of land is of course implied here. He is advised to do the same through the kṛṣīvalas in other regions throughout his principality and to take a just part of the produce from all of them.5 The ruler therefore is prominently represented as a landlord cultivator. The peasants, especially those in the bhaktagramas, appear as sharecroppers or temporary tenants in a state of dependence on the ruler as well as the land. Apparently, the whole account shows an attempt to give an ideological polish to the institution of peasant subjection. A similar practice with dependant tenure may be found in the lands held by the Buddhist monasteries, which provided the peasants with the fields and bulls and usually received one-sixth of the produce.6 However, there is no evidence to show that the peasants were under acute servitude.

Mention may also be made of an inscription (A.D. 1173) from south India which shows how restrictions were sought to be imposed on the movements of the humble folk in the local units of a more or less closed economy. The record runs:

Those who engage themselves in these services beyond the village will be considered to have transgressed the law, to have committed fault against the great assembly and to have ruined the village.<sup>7</sup>

The relative isolation of villages may always be found to have been a characteristic of the Indian socio-economic set-up. But during this period, owing to feudal tendencies, localism backed by somewhat closed economy became so much accentuated that there developed a set of special local observances and obligations which differed from village to village.

<sup>1</sup> vaiśyakanyāsamudbhūtaḥ brāhmaņena tu saṃskṛtaḥ, sa hyārddhika iti jūeyo bhojyo viprairna saṃsayaḥ, Prāyaścitta-kāṇḍa, xi, 25. It is well known that ardhasīrīs or ārdhikas generally belonged to the śūdra caste, but the way in which their origin has been explained suggests that the vaiśyas had also been largely reduced to the status of sharecroppers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lekhapaddhati, p. 18.

<sup>3 42. 139</sup>ff.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 42. 174-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. 42. 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Takakusu, Record of the Buddhistic Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-tsing (Oxford, 1896), p. 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Cited in A. Appadorai, Economic Conditions of South India (A.D. 1000-1500), i (Madras, 1936), 273.

The late Puranic passages in the Brhannaradiya, the Devibhagavata and the Skanda recommend the observance of grāmācāra, grāmadharma or sthānācāra in addition to deśadharma and jātidharma. The feudal aristocracy was actively connected with the accentuation of localism and regionalism.4 The villages, however, cannot be said to have been completely isolated units. In religion and some other matters such as marriage they entered into relations and contacts with the outside world.

The attitude of the princes and chiefs towards peasants and their anxiety to maintain the local agrarian economy are also expressed at one place in the Yuktikalpataru of Bhoja (11th century). The text stresses the necessity of protecting or rather preserving the krsīvalas (peasants) in every village on the ground that agriculture, the source of all wealth. depends upon their labour. 5 This kind of attitude must have reinforced restrictions on the movement of the peasants and their subjection. The rulers of the period began to grant to the temples, monasteries, individual brahmanas and also to their officers and vassals not only the revenues of villages carrying with them authority only in a subsidiary capacity over the inhabitants thereof, but also estates with specified authority over their residents such as peasants, artisans, etc., in the village grants. Even with the grants of the former type the power of the beneficiaries over the people could have increased, especially with the waning of the central authority. But this did not necessarily lead to the subjection of the people in all cases. The chances for it were greater in those regions whose economy was backward.

With the emergence of a hierarchically organized ruling aristocracy and the weak functioning of exchange economy, especially in the agrarian set-up characterized by localism, the magnitude of forced labour naturally grewin volume during the post-Gupta period.6 We get ample evidence of heavy taxation and oppression in the estates of the chiefs and village lords and in the principalities of kings. Extra-legal and arbitrary exactions were legalized in some regions.

The estates of the chiefs, officers, military men, and even of the brāhmaṇas and religious institutions may be regarded as only roughly corresponding to the estates of the vassals of European feudalism, known as manors, which, as pointed out by Marc Bloch, were first and foremost communities of "dependants who were by turns protected, commanded and oppressed by their lords to whom many of them were bound by hereditary

<sup>1</sup> Bṛhannāradīya Purāṇa, 22.11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Devibhāgavata cited in Hazra, Studies in Upapurāṇas, ii (Calcutta, 1963), 325.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Skanda Purāṇa (Brahmakhaṇḍa) 3.2.40.65. See also Smṛticandrikā (12th century), Section on Deśadharma.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> In the Lekhapaddhati (p. 51) we find a form of document called silapatra being issued by the ruler to settle the disputes among the Rajaputra village chiefs regarding particular fields and families of village inhabitants (ksetraikasya visaye kutumbavisaye parasparanı sañjātavairau) and to impress upon them that they should remain contented with their own fiefs (grāsa). But villages were not always coterminous with the holdings of the chiefs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> rājňopāyena samrakṣyā grāme grāme kṛṣīvalāḥ. tebhyaḥ kṛṣistataścārthā arthebhyaḥ sarvasampadaḥ (Yuktikal-pataru, Calcutta, 1917, p. 6). A system of clientèle oscillating between protection and oppression led to the constitution of serfdom in Western Europe (Marc Bloch, op. cit., p. 265).

<sup>6</sup> EI, xxx, no. 30; Yaśastilaka, 3.172.

links".1 But the classical manorial system being a "type of economic, social and administrative organization based on land tenure" and "well adapted to an age of economic decentralization and barter economy"2 was different in many respects from its Indian counterpart. The intensity and scope of subjection and dependence of the peasants in the Indian context were much less than the servitude of the peasantry in Western feudalism, which overburdened the peasants with service on the lord's farm and payment of various dues, and rendered them dependant on the lord as well as on the land.3

The Brhannāradīya Purāņa4 shows that under acute distress caused by famines and burdensome taxes the people migrated en masse to regions rich in wheat and barley. A verse in the Subhāṣitaratnakośa of Vidyākara (12th century) also indicates that the people oppressed by the bhogapati (landlord or feudal chief) left the village. Furthermore, the social function of wages had not become so insignificant in India as in the Western manorial system.6 It may also be noted that with the wide hold of the Dharmaśāstra literature in this age7 the regulating principles of dharma contained therein may have worked as a unifying force of considerable importance against localism, which is the chief mark of feudalism, more or less like the public law in England,8 with the result that justice and social usages including property laws could not have been largely feudalized. The complex mass of feudal laws, in spite of the fact that there were some similar practices, could not be systematized and consolidated in India as in some parts of medieval Europe.

The Indian economy had not changed to such an extent as to bring about all the conditions which are noticed in classical Western feudalism. For general resemblance we are perhaps to look not so much to the manorial system of the first feudal era, that is, the age of classical feudalism, as to that of the later feudal age which appears there in the 12th century and which was characterized by a decline in the size of the démesné, reduction of compulsory labour service, the lord's abandonment of the personal exploitation of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 279.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, x, 97.

<sup>3</sup> According to Marc Bloch, "the manor in itself has no claim to a place among the institutions which According to Marc Bloch, "the manor in itself has no claim to a place among the institutions which we call feudal", though it acquired great prominence in Western feudalism, op. cit., 279. The classical form of manorialism and serfdom typical of Western Europe could not emerge in China or Japan under feudal conditions (Wu-Ta-K'un, Past and Present, no. 1, 1952, 192; J. W. Hall, Comparative Studies in Society and History, v, no. 1, 1963, 35). Full serfdom with attachment to the soil developed in Russia much later when it had become a closed country (Owen Lattimore, Past and Present, no. 12, 55). On the basis of a survey of the 12th century it has been remarked that real serfs, servi or nativi, were in a small minority in England (R. H. Hilton, Past and Present, no. 31, 1965, 11). or nativi, were in a small minority in England (R. H. Hilton, Past and Present, no. 31, 1965, 11).

<sup>5 35.28,</sup> D. D. Kosambi and V. V. Gokhale (ed), Harvard Oriental Series, xlii (Harvard, 1957). However, some families, in spite of the miserable state to which they were reduced, continued to stay there under the deep-rooted belief that it was their ancestral land, Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See the author's article in D. C. Sircar (ed), Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India (Calcutta, 1966),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> grāmācārastathā grāhyah smṛtimārgāvirodhatah, Bṛhannāradīya Purāṇa, 22.11. According to Derrett the Sāstra was Sastra was preaching cultural and jurisprudential harmony, if not homogeneity: the Sastra was on the whole "recommendatory or at most directory, rather than mandatory" (Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient will 1964, 117, 119)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Maitland, The Constitutional History of England, p. 164.

estate, the transformation of peasants into producers, heavily taxed but economically autonomous, and, above all, the comparative relaxation of the bond of human domination.<sup>1</sup>

It has been pointed out that the śūdras in servitude may at times have resorted to violence. Attention has been drawn in this connection to the armed revolts<sup>2</sup> of the Kaivartas in Bengal in the time of Mahīpāla and Rāmapāla. But we do not come across many instances of this type, and the situation in India does not appear to have been similar to that in medieval Europe. The hold of traditionalism, the particular type of religious and social ideology making men acquiesce in the existing set-up and the division of society, especially the proliferation of the śūdras into numerous caste groups,<sup>3</sup> tended to minimize the possibility of organized armed revolts. However, some pieces of evidence do suggest refractoriness on the part of the śūdras. The Skanda Purāṇa makes a sweeping remark<sup>4</sup> to this effect and speaks of the violation of the charters under which the villages were held by the beneficiaries. A story in the Kathāsaritsāgara<sup>5</sup> also indicates that oppression and maladministration could lead to the holders of estates being thrown out of their possessions. But it is not known whether this could happen as a result of the resumption of the village grants under such circumstances or because of popular revolts and uprisings.

The literary, epigraphic and numismatic data indicate some progress in trade and commerce and greater use of money particularly in western India in the 11th and 12th centuries.<sup>6</sup> The methods of agriculture and the crops mentioned in literature and inscriptions of the age betoken a developed stage of agrarian economy. These economic developments may naturally have contributed to the loosening of restrictions on the mobility of peasants and artisans. But on the other hand traditionalism as manifested in the caste system and the self-sufficient village economy emphasized localism together with social and geographical immobility.<sup>7</sup> Any change of considerable magnitude was therefore ruled out. In any case we notice regional variations depending on the predominance of one or the other of the two factors.

In the Laṭakamelaka, which reflects the conditions obtaining in the kingdom of the Gāhaḍavālas in the 12th century, the village chief Saṅgrāmavisara is depicted as being very particular about making money by all possible means. This kind of attitude was obviously favourable to the disuse of labour service and the abolition of restrictions on the mobility of the humble village folk. The Rājataraṅgiṇī bears witness to the circulation of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Marc Bloch, op. cit., pp. 253f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. N. Bose, Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, ii (Calcutta, 1945), 486; R. S. Sharma, op. cit., pp. 156, 268.

<sup>3</sup> Skanda Purāna (3.2.39.290) refers to the śūdras as jātibandhena pīditāh,

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 1.2.40.227.

<sup>5</sup> Tawney (tr.), ii, 59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Cf. R. S. Sharma, op. cit., chapter VI; Lallanji Gopal, op. cit., chapters VI-IX.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The hold of traditionalism had obviously minimized the need to take recourse to positive means of imposing restriction on the mobility of the people.

money in Kashmir where forced labour was sometimes commuted into payment in cash.¹ Interestingly enough, the term viṣṭi (meaning forced labour) is conspicuous by its absence in some inscriptions (11th-12th centuries) of the Cāhamānas, the Cālukyas, the Paramāras, the Gāhaḍavālas and the Candellas. This, however, does not necessarily imply the total abolition of forced labour, especially in view of the fact that the term is mentioned in some contemporary literary works.²

We have some evidence of the feudalistic set-up adapting itself to the developing economy.<sup>3</sup> Some Cāhamāna grants<sup>4</sup> (12th century) specifically refer to the transfer of landless peasants to a god, which signify the continuing dependence of peasants and restriction on their mobility in spite of the increasing use of coins in Rajasthan. As a matter of fact such conditions continued to exist in some regions there down to the British period.<sup>5</sup>

But on the whole during the Sultanate period the classical Indian feudal system appears to have declined. The economic forces had already begun to inhibit it in western India in the 11th and 12th centuries, though its decline was caused mainly by the change in the character and composition of the ruling aristocracy with the break-up of the old ruling hierarchy and the wider circulation of coins coinciding with the regular practice of payment to the peasants in cash,<sup>6</sup> which was bound to contribute to the growth of economic mobility. Large-scale trade between the town and the country is also said to have developed in the 14th century.<sup>7</sup> All these factors may have tended to loosen the restrictions on peasantry.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> v. 172 ff; vii. 1088. The term rūdhabhārodi occurs in the Rājatarangini for forced labour employed in carrying loads.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lakṣmīdhara's Kṛtyakalpataru, Rājadharmakāṇda, p. 94.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A phenomenon of a somewhat similar nature is noticed in the 17th-century Russia where serf economy "began to adapt itself to the developing markets" (A. M. Pankratova, ed, A History of the USSR, pt. i, Moscow, 1947, 201).

<sup>4</sup> EI, xxxiii, vi (April 1960), 245-6.

Even in later times the class of cultivators known as basai, though not destitute of property or civil rights, resided in their master's estate (Tod, Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, ed, W. Crooke, i, 206). The degraded cultivator called hali (ploughman) was also compelled by the need for defence against external violence to surrender the land be owned to the protector and then to labour on it for subsistence (Ibid).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Moreland, The Agrarian System of Moslem India (Cambridge, 1929), p. 204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Irfan Habib, "The Social Distribution of Landed Property in pre-British India", Enquiry, New Series, ii, no. 3 (1965), 46, 52.

## EMERGENCE OF BRĀHMAŅAS AS LANDED INTERMEDIARIES IN KARNATAKA C. A.D. 1000-1300.\*

Sister M. Liceria A.C. (Felicites Pinto)

Epigraphic evidence of land grants to the brāhmanas in Karnataka is meagre before the eighth century A.D. A Malavalli record¹ of the second century A.D. refers to a certain brāhmana recipient of a freehold village. During the period c. A.D. 200-800 we have generally no reference to the gift of tax-free land or villages to the brāhmanas in Karnataka. From this Rice concludes that the brāhmanas of the region migrated to other regions on account of lack of support from kings and princes. Whether or not this may have been really the case is debatable. But there are grounds to believe that from the ninth century A.D. onwards brāhmanas from various parts of the country came to the Mysore region, received land grants and emerged as landed intermediaries between the state and the peasantry. In the traditions of the modern Havig or Haiga brāhmanas and the Tulu

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1 ARIE, no. 381 of 1954-5.
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\* ABBREVIATIONS:

AK=Arasikera (taluk)

APGAS = Andhra Pradesh Government Archaeological Series

ARIE = Annual Reports of Indian Epigraphy

ARSIE = Annual Reports of South Indian Epigraphy

BKI = Bombay Karnataka Inscription

BL=Belur (taluk)

Cd=Chitradurga (taluk)

Cn=Channarayapatna (taluk)

Dg=Davangere (taluk)

EC=Epigraphia Carnatica

EI=Epigraphia Indica

HAS=Hyderabad Archaeological Series

Hn=Hassan (taluk)

JBBRAS = Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

Kd=Kadur (taluk)

KI = Karnataka Inscriptions

MAR=Annual Report of Archaeology, Mysore

Ng=Nagmangala (taluk)

Sb=Sorab (taluk)

SII = South India Inscriptions

Sk=Shikarpur (taluk)

brāhmaṇas Ahikṣetra1 is mentioned as the place from where the brāhmaṇas were brought into Canara. According to an epigraph of A.D. 1200,2 Mukkanna Kadamba, looking for brāhmaṇas in the south and not finding any, proceeded without further delay to the north and having worshipped at the Ahicchatra agrahāra succeeded in obtaining 32 brāhmaņa families purified by 12,000 agnihotras. He despatched them and had them settled in the outskirts of the city, in the great agrahāra Sthānagunda (Tānagundur in the Shimoga district). An earlier record from Nanjangud belonging to the 10th century states that from Ahicchatra came originally groups of learned brāhmaṇas to the southern country.3 A Ganga epigraph of A.D. 11624 also mentions that the Ganga kings reached Ahicchatra in the course of a victorious expedition and brought 50 chief brahmana families to the south.

Another tradition speaks of the Havig or Haiga brāhmanas as having come from Valabhīpura.5 This probably refers to the arrival of brāhmanas at Gokarna prior to their distribution throughout Tuluva, and it is suggested that this movement of brahmanas might have been effected by the destruction of Valabhī in Kathiawar by the Arabs in the seventh or eighth century A.D. The Mayara Varmā Carita6 states that Mayara Varmā was born at Valabhīpura and brought brāhmanas from there to the west coast and Banavāsi. These brāhmanas were distributed by his son throughout Haiga and Tuluva, especially at Gokarna. But there is no historical evidence to confirm this statement.

There is sufficient evidence to show that some brahmanas migrated from Bengal. The Mādinūr grant7 of Taila II, dated A.D. 1136, refers to a brāhmana donee, Revaya Dvidi Cattopadhyaya Samavedī, who officiated at the performance of brahmanda kratu (mahādāna or supreme gift) for the king. On this occasion king Taila offered a freehold gift of the village Modeyanūr to a brāhmaņa belonging to the Kāśyapa gotra. This brāhmaņa along with others bearing this surname had probably migrated from eastern India, particularly Bengal, where the surname Chattopadhyaya is still preserved. It may be noted that modern Chattopadhyayas belong to the Kāśyapa gotra and are sāmavedins. They, along with Banerjees, Mukherjees and Gangulis, hailed from Rādha (south-west Bengal) and were known as Rādhi brāhmanas. Instances are available of brāhmanas who migrated from Bengal and settled in Orissa<sup>8</sup> and Andhra.<sup>9</sup> Hence it is likely that the brāhmaṇas of Mādinūr grant also belonged to Bengal from where they migrated to Karnataka.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. Sturrock, Madras District Manuals, i, South Canara, 59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EC, vii, Sk. no. 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EC, x, Ng. no. 269.

<sup>4</sup> EC, iv, Hn. no. 269.

<sup>5</sup> North Canara Gazetteer, i, 117.

<sup>6</sup> Mackenzie Collections, quoted in J. Sturrock, op, cit., p. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> HAS (1958), A Corpus of Inscriptions of Kannada districts of Hyderabad State, p. 28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Binayak Misra, Dynasties of Medieval Orissa, quoted in R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism (Calcutta Uni-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> HAS (1958), p. 28.

Inscriptions<sup>1</sup> mention brāhmaṇas with the surname Bhaṭṭopādhyāya who must have come from Bengal.

Some brāhmaņas are said to have been brought to Karnataka from the Tamil kingdom and Madhyadeśa. The Nilgund copper plates² of Vikramāditya VI register the grant of the village Nirugund and other hamlets in Kogali to a number of brāhmaṇas. The record gives us the interesting information that in A.D. 1087 the emperor invited these brāhmaṇas from the Tamil country (drāviḍa deśa) and made them settle in Nirugund which was converted into an agrahāra. The Thana plates³ of Śilāhāra Nāgārjuna, dated A.D. 1039, register the grant of a village by the king to a brāhmaṇa named Mādhava Paṇḍita, son of Gokarṇa Paṇḍita, belonging to the Parāśara gotra of the Yajurveda śākhā who is stated to have migrated from Hastigrāma in Madhyadeśa. A Yādava record of A.D. 1052⁴ refers to a brāhmaṇa named Sillana belonging to the Śrīvatsa gotra who had left his village Oyāri in Madhyadeśa and come to Malwa in the time of Paramāra Vairisiṃha. The grandson of this brāhmaṇa, Śrīdhara, is said to have received a grant of four villages from the Yādava king, Bhillama III, for having been sincerely devoted to him. Probably this brāhmaṇa was won over by the Yādavas during their war with the Paramāras of Malwa.

In the Cochin Census Report of 1901 the Konkani brāhmaņas are enumerated as a branch of the Sārasvata sub-division of the Pañca Gaudas.<sup>5</sup> The Konkani brāhmaņas are probably the descendants of the Sārasvata section of northern brāhmaṇas who in the remote past had migrated to Maharashtra. Inscriptions<sup>6</sup> refer to the *Pañca Gaudas* who had travelled as far south as Sanjana on the west coast during the 10th century. It is also said that the original home of the Konkani brāhmaṇas was Tirhut<sup>7</sup> on the banks of the Sārasvati from where they migrated to the south and settled in Goa, Konkan and other neighbouring areas.

The Karhad brāhmaṇas, who are numerous in the South Kanara district, are stated to have come southward from Karhad in the Satara district. Patronage by kings and feudatories and the grant of freehold villages must have induced a large number of brāhmaṇas to migrate to Karnataka during the period c. A.D. 1000-1200. This resulted in an increase in the number of brāhmaṇa settlements and brāhmaṇa landholders in Karnataka.

Generally individual brāhmaṇas were granted land, but sometimes they received it collectively, their number varying from two to 1,300. In A.D. 1169 Nāgarasa assigned

- <sup>1</sup> APGAS, iii (1961), no. 5, 8.
- <sup>2</sup> ARSIE, no. 8 of 1928-9.
- 3 EI, xxxvii, no. 45.
- 4 Ibid. no. 37.
- 5 Thurston, Castes and Tribes of South India, ii, 392.
- <sup>6</sup> EI, xxxii, no. 4.
- 7 Nanjundayya, Mysore Castes and Tribes, ii, 549.

Brahmasamudra to 12 brāhmaṇas; Modeyanūr was granted to 20 brāhmaṇas by Āhavamalla; Banaur was transferred to 74 brāhmanas³ by Ballāladeva; Ummacchige was donated to 104 brāhmaṇas4 by Kesavayya; Ballālapura was assigned to 120 brāhmaṇas5 and Dindigur to 155 brāhmaṇas6 by Hoysala Ballāladeva. Kālidāsa endowed 257 brāhmaṇas<sup>7</sup> with Nāgavāvi; Cāmuṇḍaraya granted Hāveri to 400 brāhmaṇas;<sup>8</sup> king Vikramāditya transferred Telasanga to 500 brāhmanas; Singhana donated Kukkanūr to 1,000 brāhmaṇas<sup>10</sup> and Someśvara alienated Begūr in favour of 1,300 brāhmaṇas.<sup>11</sup> Even the feudatories and ministers deemed it a privilege to convert villages into agrahāras and assign them to the brahmanas either collectively or after dividing them into shares. This led to the introduction of several brāhmana landholders in Karnataka. A perusal of the epigraphs indicates that there were more brahmana settlements in Dharwar, Shimoga, Bijapur, Belgaum, Hassan, Mandya and Chickmaglur districts than in the Tamil areas of Tumkūr, Bangalore and Kolar where more villages were granted to temples. The brāhmanas in these Tamil areas were rather few and mostly trustees of religious benefactions granted to temples. However, the highest number of brahmana settlements is to be found in the Dharwar district; Shimoga and Hassan come only next in the list. It appears that very few villages were assigned to the brahmanas in the Raichur, Chitradurg and in the North and South Kanara districts of the modern Karnataka state.

The period witnessed an increase in the number of landowning temples and mathas. In Karnataka temples possessed more property than individual priests. In fact, the rulers and their subjects granted more villages to the temples than to the brāhmaṇas—a practice not so common in northern India. In A.D.  $1070^{12}$  king Someśvara alienated the villages of Kerohalli and Puṇḍagrāma in favour of the temple of Anantaketibhuvaneśa. The villages of Togaravāḍi and Bhuvanahalli were granted by king Narasimha in A.D. 1162 for the maintenance of the Keśava temple.<sup>13</sup> In A.D. 1256 king Rāmanātha made a gift of the village Paḍiyakanūr to his temple at Sonnaligoyapura.<sup>14</sup> The Munirabād stone inscription<sup>15</sup> of king Vikramāditya states that having constructed a Śiva temple at Pulige Pulge the

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<sup>1</sup> EC, vi, Kd. no. 51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> ARIE, no. 234 of 1953-4.

<sup>3</sup> EC, vi, Kd, no. 49.

<sup>4</sup> BKI, i(ii), no. 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EC, v, Ak. no. 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> EC, v, Cn. no. 172.

<sup>7</sup> MAR (1916), p. 47.

<sup>8</sup> ARSIE, no. 89 of 1932-3.

<sup>9</sup> ARIE, no. 189 of 1953-4.

<sup>10</sup> BKI, i (i), no. 121.

<sup>11</sup> EC, vii, Sk. no. 12.

<sup>12</sup> EC, viii, Sb. no. 276.

<sup>13</sup> EC, vii, Sk, no. 87.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> BKI, ii (i), no. 190.

<sup>15</sup> HAS, no. 5 (1922), 32.

king conferred on it land owned by him as paternal estate (sukla dravya)—113 kamma of garden land, 750 kamma of irrigated land, 60 kamma of kallakuppe (stony ground), 300 kamma of wet land, 20 mattar of red loamy land and one house site with all the rights of ownership. Fifty mahājanas also gave 200 kamma of garden land, 4 mattar of cultivable land and one flower garden. Thus under the Cālukyas and the Hoysalas temples rather than priests seem to have emerged as important intermediaries in land.

It is true that religious grants did not involve any economic obligations towards the donees who could only claim the good wishes and moral support of the beneficiaries. But they gave rise to several grades of rights in the soil—the assignee owing it to the royal favour, the religious beneficiary owing it to the assignee's favour and the peasant owing it to the favour of both.

Compared with the lay feudatories of kings, the religious beneficiaries and the brāhmaṇa vassals were placed in a privileged position. With the former military service formed an essential condition of vassalage. The lay feudatories of the Cālukyas, Hoysalas and Yādavas were mostly military officers of great reputation. They received grants of villages either as a reward for some military service already rendered or in anticipation of such service in times of future wars and crises. The unarmed brāhmaṇa donees were not expected to render any kind of military service to their benefactors. Besides, lay vassalage could be cancelled by the overlord if he was not pleased with the vassal. But such an action with regard to freehold agrahāras was considered sinful, as is indicated by the imprecatory verses invariably inserted in the grants.

The brāhmaṇa beneficiaries enjoyed several other privileges. Royal soldiers could not enter their estates.<sup>3</sup> The donees did not have to supply free food or labour to the officials of the state, and most of them were exempted from the payment of taxes and imposts. All this is clearly brought out by a grant of the village Nidugurite in A.D. 11234 by mahāsāmanta Udayāditya. Another grant of two villages namely Cālukyasamudra and Mukkude made during the same year<sup>5</sup> exempted the beneficiaries from all imposts and revenues and also from the inspection of royalties. The lay feudatory on the other hand paid taxes to his overlord, quite unlike the brāhmaṇa vassal. Besides, the latter was given control over fines accruing from ten offences.<sup>6</sup> A Balambid record of A.D. 10887 refers to the assembly of 1,000 mahājanas of the village Piriyakoreyūr as having been endowed with the power of bestowing favour on the deserving and punishment to the wicked. Another grant of A.D. 13188 authorizes the brāhmaṇas to settle all disputes within the donated areas. Evidently the brāhmaṇa donees enjoyed wide judicial authority which

<sup>1</sup> EI, xix, no. 24B, 148-54; EI, xvii, no. 10, 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> SII, ix (i), no. 109, 163.

<sup>3</sup> JBBRAS, xviii, no. 49, 253-9.

<sup>4</sup> EC, xi, Cd. no. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Dg. no. 1.

<sup>6</sup> JBBRAS, xviii, no. 49, 253-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> KI, iv, no. 55, 71.

<sup>8</sup> EC, vii, Ak. no. 113.

was not permitted to the lay vassals. In one case the brāhmaṇas were authorized to award specified punishment for various offences. Thus the nose of a woman guilty of adultery was to be cut off and the adulterer was to be put to death. A fine of eight paṇas was to be imposed on those who caused wounds by beating. All this gave the brāhmaṇas complete authority over the land or village granted to them.

As the sole fiscal authorities of their locality, the brāhmaṇa feudatories of the king were entitled to sell, lease or mortgage land in the donated village. Thus the brāhmaṇas of the Bonnivura agrahāra sold a plot of land to the local watchman (taļara). A plot of land measuring 114 mattar of black soil in Brahmapuri was leased to some residents by the brāhmaṇas in A.D. 1024. In A.D. 1060 one thousand mahājanas of Piriyakoreyūr sold plots of land to some brāhmaṇa householders of the locality. In A.D. 1080 the same assembly of mahājanas sold one mattar of land in the Goluvalli locality to Bhutagāvurḍa for eight gadyāṇas. This right was often not conceded to the lay vassals who were, however, permitted to make grants out of their own assignments. This shows that in contrast to the lay feudatories, the brāhmaṇa donees enjoyed several rights and privileges amounting to complete ownership of land without the slightest degree of royal intervention in the donated village or piece of land.

The brāhmaṇas also enjoyed the right to confine the working population to the donated estate. The Kharepatan plates of the Śilāhāra chieftain, Rattarāja, issued in A.D. 1008,7 allotted to the Śaiva ācāryas of the Mattamayūra line three villages with one family each of washermen, potters, garlandmakers and oilmen. In A.D. 1173 heggade Yareyaṇṇa transferred a piece of land together with a family of oilmen and a family of garlandmakers.8 An epigraph of A.D. 12639 suggests that the cultivators of a block of land were attached to it and not normally allowed to migrate to other areas. Often villages were transferred to the brāhmaṇas along with the cultivators as was done by mahāsāmantādhipati Sakkaya Nāyaka in A.D. 131510 when he granted the village Araiyūranpalli in the Muttakkūr division to certain donees. This enabled the brāhmaṇas to restrict the movements of these poor cultivators who were reduced to the condition of semi-serfs and were at the mercy of their brāhmaṇa landlords. The displacement of tenants to create an agrahāra and the restrictions placed on their freedom of movement must have caused them considerable inconvenience. In case of oppression they could not take shelter in another village or

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<sup>1</sup> SII, ix (i), no. 77, 47.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> MAR (1930), no. 75, 235.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> EI, xv, no. 6, 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> KI, iv, no. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. no. 55.

<sup>7</sup> EI, iii, no. 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EC, v, BL. no. 114.

<sup>9</sup> SII, xv, no. 72.

<sup>10</sup> EC, ix, BL. no. 102.

reclaim virgin land of which there was plenty in Karnataka. Their position was therefore no better than that of serfs who remained perpetually tied to the manorial lord in medieval Europe. In both cases there was little mobility and escape from prevailing conditions was impossible. The only difference between the two was that the European serf was generally attached to secular lords and barons, whereas his Indian counterpart was to serve religious beneficiaries.

Compared with such conditions, the customary laws regarding leases of temple lands were favourable and more helpful to tenants. A Hoysala record of A.D. 1272¹ from Belūr belonging to the reign of Vīraballāla gives interesting details of the conditions under which temple lands at Udbhavanarasimhapura were leased to 12 cultivators. The tenants were freed from forced labour (sollan biṭṭi) and also exempted from payment of taxes on houses which they occupied to the north of the temple. They were given freedom to cultivate and raise any crops on the land measuring 36 salages and remit for six years from tārana at the rate of 32 gadyāṇa and 2 pon and from sarvajit at the rate of 54 gadyāṇa which were to be used for carrying on worship at the Pañcikeśvara temple. The temple in medieval times was an important employer and gave many facilities to cultivators by way of loans, advances, exemption from imposts and attention to the maintenance of tanks and ponds in good condition.² But like the brāhmaṇa donees, the temples also placed restrictions on the movements of tenants from one place to another. Though the donees benefited from such arrangements, it adversely affected the cultivators who had no scope for bettering their fortunes.

Notwithstanding his privileged status as a freeholder, the brāhmaṇa donee was as much bound by the ties of vassalage to the overlord as was a lay feudatory. These ties, though not recorded, were, however, unmistakably there. This is apparent from the fact that villages were often granted to the high brāhmaṇa ministers and officials of the kings, who, for obvious reasons, were men of high integrity and responsibility. Anantapālarasa, Keśirāja, Gaṅgarāja, Keśava and several others who held high offices as also some of the governors of provinces were responsible persons devoted to the monarchs. Grants of freeholds to such trusted servants amounted to nothing less than establishing the ties of vassalage, which were based upon the fidelity of the donee towards the donor and the confidence placed by the latter in the integrity of the former.

With the passage of time, however, the freeholders lost more and more of their privileges and the control of the donor over the holding became more assured. The donors sought to extend their control by asking the brāhmaṇas to pay regular taxes. Their absolute right to the free disposal of the shares of the landed estate was also restricted. Moreover, freeholds which were usually assigned to brāhmaṇas were also granted to trusted officials belonging to lower castes. Thus Amitayya, 4 who belonged to the fourth varṇa,

<sup>1</sup> EC, iv, Ng. no. 39.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EC, v, BL. no. 83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EC, iv, Ng. no. 39.

<sup>4</sup> EC, vi, Kd. no. 36.

was not only raised to the status of a dandanāyaka and governor of a province but also assigned several villages by his master. All this in effect reduced the brāhmaṇa freeholder to the position of an ordinary feudatory.

In spite of the loss of privileges, a large number of brāhmaṇa officials still continued in the service of kings and augmented their landed possessions through land grants. Groups of brāhmaṇas also continued to receive land from generous benefactors. These collective land grants were generally issued when it was considered expedient to defend the border of a kingdom by settling a large number of brāhmaṇas there. It is also possible that the kings issuing such charters found it difficult to collect taxes from the frontier areas. As the area of land in the possession of brāhmaṇas went on increasing, many of them abandoned their priestly duties and busied themselves with such secular functions as the management and cultivation of land and the collection of taxes, like any other landowner. They appear to have amassed enormous wealth under the kings of Vijayanagar and some of them continue to hold a lot of landed property even now.

Epigraphs show that only certain classes of people were favoured with grants, which led to the unequal distribution of land in Karnataka. On the one hand there were the vassals, officers, temples and brāhmaṇas who were assigned large areas of land and on the other were the peasants and artisans, majority of whom were neither vassals nor ministers, who had little or no share in the ownership of land in Karnataka. They were destined to serve the landed magnates who at times exploited them. Though there are no instances of open rebellion, the exploitation of the people must have caused a lot of bitterness and tension among them.

The oft-repeated practice of land grants and sub-infeudation thus led to the emergence of different groups of landholders in Karnataka. These were mostly brāhmaṇas invited from outside Karnataka. The method of installing such landholders proved beneficial to the rulers, since they infused in the people loyalty to the established order of things by maintaining and upholding the authority of their patrons. Some of them even possessed better knowledge of agriculture with which they helped to bring about the economic progress of the country. Besides the brāhmana landholders, there were nonreligious vassals and officers who were assigned a single village or several of them. Some of the vassals exercised the right of creating their own sub-vassals to whom they allotted land. All this created feudal conditions and gave rise to a feudal hierarchy in which superior landholders were imposed on ordinary cultivators. A series of ties bound the members of the ruling group from the king down to the village headman, each member owing allegiance to his immediate overlord and not to the ultimate suzerain. What is more significant, even brāhmaṇas came to be classed under one feudal rank or the other according to their occupation and the area of land held by them. It appears that the number of peasant proprietors paying land tax directly to the state was on the decline. They were responsible not to the state but to the brahmanas, temples, officers and vassals who held land. Thus the system of peasant proprietorship was seriously undermined, although the process did not give rise to zamīndārī system in early medieval times.

# SOCIAL MOBILITY IN PRE-MUGHAL INDIA

### S. C. Misra

The age which began with the invasions of Muḥammad of Ghūr and ended with the emergence of the Mughals has aptly been termed an age of political upheavals, social change and religious ferment. The catalytic agent in this massive process was indubi-

tably the impact of Islam in its manifold aspects.

In examining a single feature of this process, especially social mobility, one is however faced with rather difficult problems. Mobility is characteristic of every social system; not even the most rigid can avoid peripheral fluidity; likewise, periods of social stress promote mobility by loosening the cohesiveness of the system and thus allowing the tensions to surface. Nevertheless, with reference to a particular age, it is essential to inquire if mobility is central to the social system in that period or peripheral; is it individual and familial or wider and societal, affecting organized groups like castes?

Questions such as these require not only a general treatment but also some quantitative analysis, which in this case is virtually impossible. We shall try to suggest, of course, impressionistically, some trends without making any pretence to their being either exhaustive or universal or even correct; our effort is more to initiate discussion than to supply

answers to problems that are beginning to be explored.

At the outset we would like to mention two general features which we have discussed elsewhere in greater detail. The impact of the new faith and the social system which was its carrier into India did not in any sense mean an obliteration of the unequal, hierarchic organization of the Indian society conveyed by the term caste. Rather it meant the proliferation of caste, the importation of caste ethos into the emergent Muslim society in India and the formation of castes or caste-analogues within its periphery. The contours of Muslim society as it came into being in India were thus not basically different in practice, though in theory and in certain situations they sought to equate to an egalitarian belief-system.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, in the wake of Turkish invasions and expansion of the Sultanate large-scale migrations, mostly but not exclusively of the Rajputs, took place. These migrations, again, were no new feature of the Indian social scene but they in turn accelerated vertical

mobility, both upwards and downwards.2

The rise of new castes by the fission process, the emergence of new groups and the displacement of existing ones in positions of power were powerful agents of social mobility, both vertical and horizontal. Considerable activity appears to have taken place in these

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. C. Misra, Muslim Communities in Gujarat: A Preliminary Study (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1964), chapter VI; cf. Imtiaz Ahmad, "The Ashraf-Ajlaf Dichotomy on Muslim Social Structure in India", The Indian Social and Economic History Review, iii, no. 3 (Delhi, September 1966).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. C. Misra, Presidential Address, Medieval India Section, Indian History Congress, Patiala Session, 1967.

centuries in the direction of the fission of old established castes and the formation of new ones, both Hindu and Muslim. The data for these movements, popular as they were, are sketchy, suggestive rather than conclusive; thus if the caste nomenclatures as given in E.A.H. Blunt's The Caste System of Northern India are any indication, it would seem that they do not pre-date this period. In other words, there was a fairly great and wide movement within the caste system which led not only to its sway in the emergent Muslim system but also to a series of adjustments within the Hindu order.

This was certainly social change of a momentous nature. But we are not sure how far it can be called social mobility, more particularly, vertical mobility. Such upward movements require in the first place an economic lever which would raise a family, a group of families or the whole caste or sub-caste. In the Muslim social system it would necessitate either the uplift of a whole sub-caste or the acceptance of the risen families by the superior group societally, particularly in marital relationships. Can it therefore be inferred that the process of change also implied an upward thrust, that if not in the Hindu, in the Muslim order the social distance was reduced between the two wings, the upper or the ruling classes and the lower, mostly local Indian converts?

We are very doubtful if anything like this happened. In the pre-industrial Indian society there was a fair degree of overlap between caste and class though it was certainly not impossible for the dominant castes to acquire and hold power locally. But by and large we can speak of ruling castes and trading castes, craftsmen castes and cultivating castes. The lowest of all were the so-called "unclean" service castes and despite the fervent pleas of saints and conversion a change does not seem to have been made in their depressed condition.2

The reasons for this are not far to seek. The levers for effecting an upward movement, especially military and economic power and control over educational opportunities, were in the hands of the privileged classes, both immigrant and indigenous. Without these it was difficult for the have-not classes to break the disabilities which confined them to their ascribed status.

We may now make a slightly more detailed examination of the mobility in the different sectors of the socio-political system as it existed during these three centuries. Our observations, however, refer exclusively to the areas covered by the Sultanate of Delhi and to its successor kingdoms and within these largely to the Gangetic doab and Gujarat.

The invasion and conquest of the Indian plains effected one of the major displacements of the period, namely, the loss of suzerain authority by the Rajputs and the acquisition of this power by the Turks. It is not possible here to analyse the changes in the constitution of this "power-élite", to borrow a term from C. Wright Mills;3 it remained very much a birth-oriented, exclusive preserve. The Ilbaris were supplanted by the Khaljis and they

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> (Oxford University Press, 1931), chapter III Section A and Appendix 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ghaus Ansari, "Muslim Caste in Uttar Pradesh", The Eastern Anthropologist, xiii, no. 2 (Special Number); Misra, MCG, pp. 132, 134.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Power Elite (Oxford University Press, 1956).

yielded place to the Tughlaqs. With them especially there was an effort to widen the base of this structure, an attempt which in fact had begun with 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī; in practice it meant the emergence of the Afghans, so far the junior partners in the power-structure, forming its second echelon. It was probably Fīrūz Tughlaq's policy of amassing slaves which led to the significant breach of this principle and the rise of nobles of Indian origin such as Zafar Khān, Mallū Iqbāl and Sārang Khān; it needed a Timūr to put a Saiyyid at the apex of the pyramid. However, the racial bias reasserted itself with the Lodīs; it is at the absolute fag-end of the Sūr era that we come to the last of the outsiders, Hīmū.

The fate of the outsiders from Raihan, Kāfūr and Khusrau to Hīmū indicates the jealousy with which the privileged, birth-conscious plutocracy guarded its power. Only through the support of the Sultan could an inroad be made into its citadel, though such favour was seen as aberrant and inexplicable in the case of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq and something worse in that of Mubārak Shāh. Khusrau's gamble proved a failure. Hīmū was seen to deserve his death not because he was a Hindu but because in the eyes of the high-born he merited nothing better. 1

The system recognized talent inasmuch as it was possible for a determined man, provided he had the right parents, to force himself to the top. Fīrūz Khaljī, Tughlaq Shāh and above all Sher Shāh were not born to power but were able to achieve it by dint of their ability. Yet however able Sher Shāh may have been, he would have been nowhere near the top had he been born anything but an Afghan. To be born an Afghan was not sufficient; surely it was necessary.

The situation in the regional Sultanates was much freer as they had come into being when Delhi itself had lost some of its stiffness. They emphasized religious conformity and neglected birth to an extent. In Gujarat the Rajputs, especially the converts from highborn sections, formed an influential section, especially in the time of Maḥmūd Begada and Muẓaffar Shāh Halīm. Both in Kashmir which did not form a part of the Sultanate of Delhi and in Bengal which broke away early the local nobility was powerful enough to hold its own.

Finally, recruitment from the slave groups was also important for certain kingdoms such as Gujarat and Malwa. In the Bahmani kingdom Arab and Persian tājirs were influential. In brief, the upward movement was relatively freer provided, again, the base was stable; support could be had at both the local and court levels and there was some cultural know-how in personal behaviour.

To some extent it is easier to sketch a pattern for the ruling classes; it is more difficult to assess the strata beneath.

We assume that the rise of the Sultanate led to a spurt in urbanization which in turn led to greater mobility. The newly developed urban centres such as Delhi, Jaunpur, Gaur, Ahmedabad, Mandu, Gulbarga and a host of others were the foci of the power of the Sultans and its radiating centres; they housed, as the accounts of Ibn Battutah and other travellers indicate, the power-élite and its huge establishments with an enormous number

<sup>1</sup> S. C. Misra, Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963), pt. i.

of slaves and attendants.1 They also contained significant parts of the army and as such a considerable number of foot-loose soldiers could be found concentrated in them at any given time.

Though these urban centres also became in time manufacturing centres of some importance, it is doubtful if at least in the initial phase this sector was a significant factor in the total demographic complex. Much more numerous appear to have been the reputable and less reputable establishments which catered to the needs of this large floating population.2 Added to the numbers which served in the household of the nobles, this section of the population together with the soldiers should have accounted for a substantial section of a city's population.

In the virtual absence of any data on this point it is difficult to be specific regarding the origin of this populace; some of them were obviously recruited from parallel Hindu castes and it was a process which presumably began about this period. Most of the Muslim service castes cited by Blunt appear to have this origin;3 this fact would therefore indicate a caste mobility which hinged primarily on the pattern of occupation and affiliation.

Distinct from the above and belonging to a different order was the movement in the craftsmen communities, especially among the weavers among whom Kabir was reared. This community was by no means a wholly urban community in these centuries; besides, it was not a low or an unclean community in the caste hierarchy and was rated equal to the bulk of the cultivating communities. There were others such as the basket-weavers, tanners and similar occupational castes which were regarded as unclean but superior to the sweepers; but these retained their castes and their mores.

That there was restiveness and tension among these groups is certain; we are inclined to accept the Weberian hypothesis also and to ascribe the fact of conversion to the social and economic tensions felt by these people. The wide popularity of the vant of the bhakti saints among these groups and the identification of some of these castes by names such as Kabīrapanthīs and Raidāsīs suggest the rejection of brāhmanism, though ironically these also mark the return of the caste ethos. Yet this transition was not accompanied by any upward social or economic thrust and did not generate a momentum which could carry these castes nearer to the upper classes reducing the distance from them.

An illustration drawn not from the julāha or weaver community but from the kalāl or wine-drawing caste would make this clear. Though Sikandar, the author of Mirāt-i-Sikandarī, is at pains to deny it, it is clear that the Sultans of Gujarat originally belonged to the kalāl community. Sādhū and Sādhāran, Zafar Khān's father and uncle, were chaudharis in a village in Thaneshwar in which the kalāls formed a dominant caste. But this local power

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit, chapter X "Caste and Islam".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mahdi Husain, tr., The Rehla of Ibn Battutah: India, Maldive Islands and Ceylon (Gaekwad Oriental Series, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1953). See particularly the description of the nobility and of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sir Syed Ahmad, ed, *T'arīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī of Zia Baranī* (Bibliotheca Indica, 1862), pp. 157-8; S. H. Askari, "Historical Value of *Basāṭīn-ul-Uns:* A Rare Literary Work of the Early 14th Century", *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, xlviii, pts i-iv (January-December 1962), 20-1.

was of no use to them until they won the favour of Fīrūz Tughlaq, then a prince, by marrying their sister to him and moving with him to the capital and later accepting Islam. In this case the rise was individual and familial secured through royal favour and by a cultural transformation which won acceptance in the ruling strata. The antecedents were useful inasmuch as these provided a fairly affluent base from which the effort could be made, but a base which was repudiated in a later situation. It was necessary for the court annalists of the Sultans to fabricate a genealogy which gave them a noble Rajput pedigree and secured them from the stigma of "low birth" or at least attempted to do so. Obviously the lower sectors of society whom Zia Baranī and other chroniclers execrate at length could approach nowhere near the upper levels even after the fact of conversion.

Likewise, Sultan Sikandar's mother, as is well known, was drawn from the goldsmith caste, a fact which was held against him at a crucial situation. Yet the goldsmiths do not appear to have benefited from this alliance, nor did the *kalāls* rise in the social or economic scale. Moreover, as the case of Zafar Khān shows, not caste *per sé* but low economic standing

was the basic disability from which such groups suffered.

It is a commonplace but fairly correct statement that in a pre-industrial economy the middle classes tend to be attenuated. The traditional commercial castes in northern India recovered pretty quickly from the shock of invasion and, if Gujarati experience is any guide, made their peace with the powers that were. Characterized by an ethos which was highly inward-oriented and politically apathetic but sensitive to trade, they do not seem to have suffered from any long-term disability in their traditional callings. The Jains, as their records show, were favoured by Alp Khān in Gujarat and Muḥammad Tughlaq in Delhi; about the Hindu trading castes there is no direct evidence other than the general one regarding the stringent control on retail trade during the period of price control.

It is quite possible that with some change in the pattern of trade the traditional volume was modified and part of the total complex passed to a new set of traders engaged in trans-Indus trade. Likewise, there had always existed in entrepot centres like Cambay Arab and Persian merchants. But except in Gujarat, where the Ismā'īlī Bohra community came into being and which after a split in the middle of the 15th century became exclusively commerce-oriented, there is no upsurge of an indigenous trading community. Unlike the Jains who gained the favour of at least one Sultan, the Ismā'īlīs were anxious to avoid their unwelcome attention.

By and large, therefore, it would seem that the bulk of the trading activities, barring those of the Ismā'īlī Bohras which were of local importance, was in the hands of the traditional trading castes thus maintaining the *status quo*. This lack of mobility in a crucial sector of society may be said to reflect the relative tenacity of the social stratification in resisting

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Misra, RMPG, chapter IX, pp. 137-41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. B. Pandey, The First Afghan Empire in India (Bookland Ltd., Calcutta, 1956), pp. 106-8; K. S. Lal, Twilight of the Sultanate (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963), pp. 162-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> L. B. Gandhi, Sri Jina-prabha Suri ane Sultan Mahammad [In Gujarati] (Lohawat Marwad, Sri Jina-hari-sagar-suri Jnana-Bhandar, 1995/1939), pp. 31-59.

<sup>4</sup> For Bohras see Misra MCG, chapter II, esp. p. 25.

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and limiting the upthrust of truant elements in the system. The failure of the commercial castes to generate any mobility upwards and to reduce the distance between the land-based military plutocracy and themselves also indicates the sharp divide which separated the power-élite from the lesser beneficiaries of the economic system.

Compared with the urban displacement and mobility consequent upon it, the rural sectors were less affected and, so far as can be perceived, showed a degree of mobility which was generally in response to progressive displacement. Thus spatial mobility, as has been noticed above, led in Gujarat to the movement of Rajputs into the fringe areas and to the establishment of Purabiya Rajputs in eastern Malwa with Chanderi and Raisin as their strongholds and the movements of Ujjainia Rajputs in Shahabad. Several other movements can be discovered if closer investigation is made.

Spatial movements in turn accelerated vertical mobility; for instance, the hill people were now affected more deeply. Evidence on this point is hard to come by, but it would seem that in central Gujarat the Rajput pressure led to Koli restiveness in less accessible areas. As late as the middle of the 16th century the Kolis formed a dominant caste in many areas of central Gujarat designated as mehwāsī and even later under the Gaekwadi rule they were regarded as difficult cultivators, their villages paying nothing more than a quit-rent.<sup>1</sup>

The economic necessities of the Sultans of Gujarat also forced them to effect a deeper penetration of the more accessible and fertile areas, leading to the emergence of the wanta tenures, in which a fourth, the wanta, was allowed to be retained by the original holder while the rest, the talpad, was appropriated by the rulers. This system is generally not found outside the Kaira district and central Gujarat; it is in this district and its southern neighbour, Broach, that we find the narwadārī and bhāgdārī tenures indicating a joint village system similar to the one in the Gangetic doab. The narwadārī tenure was held by Kunbia, a nomenclature which has now disappeared from this area to be replaced by the more honorific Patel and the more exclusive, Patidar; the bhāgidār tenure was characteristic of the Bohra Muslim community, an almost parallel community in the Muslim fold.

The wanta is first mentioned in the Mirāt-i-Sikandarī in the time of Maḥmūd III, Bahādur Shāh's successor who died in the same year as Islām Shāh, i.e., 1555, and this process of expropriation appears to have been initiated by Aḥmad Shāh a century earlier. It would therefore be a reasonable inference that in both these cases the more restive Rajputs were replaced in the talpad areas by cultivators more responsive to the needs of the rulers. As such, it reflected the crystallization of land-ownership in a new form and the surfacing of a new group as land-owners.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G. H. Desai and A. B. Clarke, Gazetteer of the Baroda State, ii (Bombay, 1923), 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> No description of the wanta and its origin is attempted here for that would form a separate discussion by itself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> B. H. Baden-Powell, The Land Systems of British India, iii (Oxford University Press, 1892), 259-69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S. C. Misra and M. L. Rehman (ed), The Mirāt-i-Sikandarī of Sikandar ibn Manjhū (M. S. University, Baroda, 1961), pp. 363-4.

In other parts of India it would seem that there was also some pattern of the settlement of formerly pastoral tribes as agriculturists—if this be seen as mobility. Possibly this is true of the Jats of Panjab and western UP. If a surmise is possible, it may be pointed out that the bhakti poetry centring on Kṛṣṇa almost uniformly speaks of the pastoral environment of his childhood, but without mentioning any nomadism. Admittedly, the suggestion is rather a far-fetched one and the poetic imagery highly idealized, but at least there is a distinct possibility of a shift by a fairly considerable tribe taking place.

In Saurashtra, which at this time was receiving the Jadeja and the Kathis, a sort of social ferment was set in motion which did not crystallize till the late 18th and 19th centuries when the Kathis finally settled down as cultivators. Neither the Sultans nor the Mughals could do much here except to hold the ring, claim suzerainty by establishing thanas and leave the interior to its own devices. The extreme fluidity which such a state engendered in a land of poor resources was indicated by the rise of special genre of Robin Hood-type brigandage which came to be known as bahar-watiā; this, in fact, was not new for, as the Rāsamālā informs us, it was also a technique of Rajput opposition to the Sultans in cases of expropriation.

With all these migrations and the emergence of new forms, particularly large-scale migrations and movements, it is certain that a great deal of mobility was engendered. Many new villages were founded and many new castes came into being. With static demographic growth and the availability of plenty of spare land, expansion was one of the more facile answers to the pressures felt at the top. But the structural organization remained largely unimpaired; in fact, it served to model the new and emergent Muslim system in its own image.

This rather contradictory phenomenon—major social changes with a low vertical class mobility—was probably due to the peculiar organization of the Indian society and the Indian physical setting. The localization of the caste-forms, their inward-orientation and the expression of caste solidarity in caste organization and caste deities resulting in caste orthodoxies which were only partially brāhmaṇized or Sanskritized at lower levels, and finally, the "liberal" recognition that to each were given his own ways led to the atomization of the Indian society into minuscular mini-systems each not complete but autonomous in itself. In this context the creation of fresh units was rendered all too easy, units which could coexist in their own ways so long as they functioned according to the prevailing ethos.

Besides, large-scale mobility is essentially a function of the diversification of economy, of technological change. The static demographic situation is in itself the best index of a dormant economy which is unfavourable to major social upheavals which could refashion society. Marx has a perceptive comment on what he calls the Asiatic epoch:

The Asiatic form necessarily survives longest and most stubbornly. This is due to the fundamental principle on which it is based, that is, that the individual does not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> District Gazetteers of Gujarat: Rajkot (Government Press, Baroda, 1965), Historical Section,

become independent of the community, that the circle of production is self-sustaining, unity of agriculture and craft manufacture, etc. If the individual changes his relation to the community, this modifies and undermines both the community and its economic premise; conversely, the modification of this economic premise is produced by its own dialectic, pauperisation, etc. Note especially, the influence of warfare and conquest. (Italics added).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E. J. Hobsbawn (ed), J. Cohen (tr.), Karl Marx: Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1964), p. 85.

## FEUDAL CONTENT OF MAHARASHTRA DHARMA

## P. V. Ranade

Maratha historiography from M. G. Ranade to G. S. Sardesai has tended to endow the Maratha political tradition with a halo of common national affinity of language, race and religion. The evocation of unity of the Maratha people and denial of internal social tensions formed the core of Maratha nationalist historiography. The socio-economic analysis of the Maratha political structure was often neglected in favour of emphasizing the Hindu and Maratha overtones in the utterances of the medieval Maratha statesmen. The theme of Maharashtra dharma that is interspersed in Maratha letters and documents was singled out as the driving force behind the rise and expansion of the Maratha power. A close study of the socio-economic roots of the Maratha political ideology lays bare the defects of Maratha nationalist historiography.

The rise of saints, poets and bhakti cult cannot be rightly called a popular Maratha reaction to the Turko-Afghan rulers. The bhakti movement was more a protest against the Hindu orthodoxy than a challenge to Islam. The cult of Vithobā or Pandharpur movement preached a spiritual and social readjustment within the Hindu social order.2 The bhakti cult was not confined to Maharashtra; its leading ideas were almost identical all over India. Ranade interpreted the Maratha upheaval as a political revolution caused by a religious revolution which moved the entire Maratha nation bound together by strong tics of language, race, religion and literature.3 This is a case of crediting the medieval Marathas with those virtues which Ranade himself was urging his contemporaries to cultivate. To establish a direct link between the rise of Maratha saint poets and that of Maratha power is no sober sociology. The warakarī movement only provided a favourable backdrop for the emergence of the Maratha power by creating a climate of social solidarity among the various communities of Maharashtra on the basis of a common religious ethos and linguistic affinity. The resurgence of regional cultures was also a common phenomenon of medieval Indian history. In Maharashtra, however, this was accompanied by the emergence of a political élite that rose to eminence in Indian politics on the basis of a religio-cultural claim backed by military sanctions.

The rise of the Maratha power and the socio-political ideology which sustained it can be better understood in terms of the historical and social environment. Ideas are not only

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See M. G. Ranade, Rise of the Maratha Power (Bombay University, 1961) and G. S. Sardesai, Main Currents of Maratha History (Dhavale, Bombay, 1923).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The bhakti movement in Maharashtra was also known as warakarī sampradāya. Annual pilgrimage to Pandharpur, the seat of Viṭhobā, was an important feature of this cult. Jnāneshvar and Nāmdev were of this cult in Maharashtra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Op. cit., pp.3-5.

embedded in social structure but are also the very essence of human environment. Medieval Maratha political heritage cannot be defined outside the framework of medieval Maratha social structure and the historical process to which it was subjected during that period.

## Watan-Basis of Maratha Feudal Structure

The medieval Maratha social structure typified Hindu society based on stratification into castes differing from each other in social status acquired through birth. The Maratha population was theoretically distributed among the four Hindu varnas-brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra. The reality, however, was far more complex and we come across brahmins, high caste Marathas, Kunbis, Mahars, Mālīs, Mangs, Sonārs, Lohārs, Ramoshis, Bhils, Kolis, Kaikadis, Muslims, Gujarati and Marawadi baniyas and other communities. Beneath the surface of caste, however, a really effective socio-economic formation that was operating in the medieval Maratha social structure was watan.

Watan is an Arabic word, the Marathi connotation of which is source of livelihood. In the Maratha period it came to be understood as a state grant made to a person who held an office or rendered a service. The Maratha socio-political system was based on watan and permeated with its spirit. A network of watans ranging from the chhatrapati, Peshwa, sardār, saranjāmdār and mokāsadār to deshmukh, pātil, deshpānde and kulkarnī indicated the tiers and ties of dependence, prestige and power and constituted the main structural feature of Maratha feudalism.2 Watan was not merely a part of the administrative apparatus, as one author believes,3 but also a hierarchy of oppressive and exploiting elements in the Maratha feudal structure. It represented the essence of the Maratha feudal system in which the major source of production was agriculture. All those social classes which constituted the Maratha agrarian system, mirāsdārs, uparīs, balutedārs and dominant in amdārs, were theoretically known as the watandars. They lived largely on the appropriation of the social surplus produced by the peasantry, though the mode of appropriation of this surplus varied from watan to watan. The balutedars and alutedars—village artisans—represented the lowest and most oppressed elements among them. 4 But as the watandars represented the dominant class which derived its wealth from control over rural economy and combined political authority and military power with wealth and social prestige in the popular mind, the watandar meant a dominant feudal element that was appropriating the surplus of the rural

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a full historical discussion of watan see S. N. Joshi, Marathekalin Samaj Darshan (A. V. G. Prakashan, Poona 1960). Also see A. R. Kulkarni, Maharashtra in the Age of Shivaji (Deshmukh

We have followed the definition of feudalism given by Nurul Hasan, Thoughts on Agrarian Relations in Mughal India (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A. R. Kulkarni, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For a full discussion of the rural groups known as balutedār and alutedār in Maharashtra see A. I. Chicherov, India: Economic Development in 16th-18th Centuries (Nauka Publishing House, Moscow, 1971), pp. 15-42

produce. 1 Among the watandars the deshpande, deshmukh, patil, kulkarni, shete and chaughula served as intermediaries between the rural masses and the higher watandars represented

by the jāgirdar, saranjāmdar, sardar and chhatrapati.

The agrarian system based on watan had prevailed in Maharashtra even before the Turko-Afghan rule. The pre-Muslim prototype of the watandar in the Deccan was the desaka.2 Whether the desakas were hereditary village officials or feudal barons of the Deccan is a moot point. The Turko-Afghan conquerors of the Deccan and their Bahmani successors recognized the pre-eminence of the desakas in the rural life of the region and these became the watandars of later times.

The principal watandars of Maharashtra were invariably drawn from the two dominant communities, brahmins and high caste Marathas. The deshmukh and pātil represented the Maratha élite and the deshpande and kulkarni a brahmin élite in a Maratha village. The Maratha rājā and members of his clan (shahannava kulis—96 families) constituted the most powerful section of the Maratha nobility in the chhatrapati period. The brahmin watandars rose to such high position under the Peshwas that the Maratha state system came to be

known as the brahmin rāj.3

The Maratha nobility shared the class character of the nobility of medieval India. The nobles living in the Sultanate, Mughal and Maratha courts might differ in taste with regard to matters of costume, etiquette and religious predilection, but they shared the common trait of living on the surplus labour extracted from the peasantry. The watandars in Maharashtra were the counterparts of zamīndārs in north India. The greed and acquisitive instinct and restless spirit of aggrandizement of this class were notorious in medieval India and these have been aptly described by Rāmchandrapant Amātya, a medieval Maratha statesman. 4 A medieval Marathi mestaka (a book of instructions) maintains :

desantarīce bhūpati; desadhane varistha hotī tī tyāncī desadhane. Nyuna athavā samāne tyāsī darpa-darsa-vigrahane. Sāmadāmadanda bhede dhane sādhī tayācī.5 (Overlords of the country amass wealth and prosperity. He, i.e., a watandar should secure a share in the dominance over land and money by all means, fair

or foul.)

The mission of emancipation of the Hindus from the so-called Muslim tyranny was not an issue with this mentor of the Maratha watandar. The rise of the Maratha watandars to eminent political position is also known as the rise of the Maratha power. How the ideological garb of Maharashtra dharma helped the dominant group of Maratha watandars to

<sup>2</sup> S. N. Joshi, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the Maratha agrarian system see Mountstuart Elphinstone's report on the conquered territories from the Peshwa in his Official Writings edited by G. W. Forrest (London, 1884).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For genealogy and social composition of the Maratha chiefs under the last Peshwa see G. W. Forrest, Selections From Letters, Despatches and Other State Papers, Maratha series, i (Government Central Press, Bombay, 1885), 694-729.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court 1707-1740 (2nd edn, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1972), p. xx fn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Quoted by S. N. Joshi, Maharashtretihasakalatila Rajyakarabharacha Abhyas (Poona University, 1959),

consolidate its position among its own people and expand its hegemony all over India is an exciting phenomenon of medieval Indian history that calls for a fresh analysis and interpretation.

Satish Chandra's characterization of the Maratha upheaval as combining an earlier movement for socio-religious reform with the movement for regional independence of the Marathas1 underlines a historical process that was going on in the 17th and 18th centuries. The rise of Maratha power nearly coincided with the emergence of a Maratha nationality. Despite the fact that the Marathas were living under diverse administrative and geographical units, a kind of Maratha cultural identity was already emerging before Shivaji commenced his political activities. The distribution of the Maratha Kunbis and brahmins over wide areas of the Deccan and a uniform speech pattern influenced by a single standard literary language had created conditions for the building up of a common psychological make-up of the Marathi-speaking people in the area. The Mughal conquest of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda demolished the triple wall that had separated the Marathas politically. Shivājī and his successors assumed political power in the name of the emerging nationality.2 The sustained use of the theme of Maharashtra dharma underlies this specific feature of the Maratha upheaval.

The Marathas, however, could never have a tryst with destiny if the political balance in the Deccan had not tilted in their favour. The disintegration of the Mughal empire and rise of the Maratha power not only coincided with but also interacted on each other. A deepening crisis of the jāgīrdārī system faced by the Mughals provided an excellent opportunity for the Marathas in their bid for regional independence.3 As pointed out by Satish Chandra, the crisis of the Mughal jāgīrdārī system was caused by the failure of the Mughal state to retain the equilibrium between state income and consumption. The available social surplus extracted by the Mughal state was insufficient to defray the cost of administration. The crisis damaged the Mughal political system beyond repair.

The peasant discontent against the oppressive Mughal taxation also provided a favourable background for the upheaval of the Maratha watandars. That the Marathas obtained support of the peasantry from the imperial territories is the recurring theme of Bhīmsen's Persian work. Irfan Habib has rightly pointed out the connection between the rise of the Maratha power and the rebellious mood of the oppressed peasantry in the Mughal territories.4 The imperial court was often shocked to see the bands of Maratha peasants joining the Marathas with arms and horses.<sup>5</sup> The Maratha turmoil had a deep mass base and its scope had swept the whole Deccan. Aurangzeb himself conceded this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The term Maharashtra *rājya* occurs in Jedhe Karina, *Shiva Charitra Pradipa* (Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Poona, 1925), p. 43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> For a discussion of the crisis of jāgīrdārī system of the Mughal empire see Satish Chandra, op. cit.,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707 (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963), pp. 347-9.

point when he decried the entire Deccan peasantry for backing the "robbers" (Aurangzeb's

way of describing the Marathas).1

The assertion of regional personality of Maharashtra and the peasant rebellion against Mughal oppression together provided a backdrop for the rise of the Maratha power. The men who founded this power were, however, the Maratha sardārs and saranjāmdārs who shared all the class features of the Mughal nobles. The Maratha upheaval represented the unleashing of new forces let loose by the dynamics of the 17th and 18th centuries. The peasant rebellion against Mughal oppression, assertion of regional Maratha personality and rise of the Maratha watandars together made up the Maratha upheaval.

Shivājī's polity was essentially a centralized monarchy which curbed the powers of the local watandārs.2 Shivājī's successors revived the saranjāmdārī system. The dialectics of the situation led to immediate benefits but long-term damage to the Maratha political system. The Mughals were expelled from Maharashtra and the Marathas entered north India, but the Maratha confederacy brought into being by Bālājī Vishwanāth contained the seeds of its disintegration and decline. While the Maratha statesmen often talked of Hindavi swarāj, Maharashtra dharma and Maharashtra rājya, their actual political behaviour underlined aggrandizement as the chief driving factor of the Maratha expansion. The zamīndārī character of the chauth and sardeshmukhī demands of the Marathas was in keeping with this. A contemporary Mughal chronicler describes the Maratha passion for zāmīndārī rights in these words:

The Marathas in general but especially the Brahmins of Dakhin have the peculiar desire to deprive all people of their means of livelihood and appropriate it for themselves. They do not spare the Zamindari of rajas, nor even the Zamindari of small people like headmen and village accountants. Uprooting heirs of ancient lineage, they establish their own possession and desire that the Brahmins of the Konkan should become the proprietors of the whole world.3

It was Ranade who formulated the theory that ideas of Maharashtra dharma stirred the Marathas to the path of political independence. V. K. Rajwade lent support to Ranade's theory by describing Maharashtra dharma as "jayishnu Hinduism" that set aside the Marathas from the rest of the Hindus who in Rajwade's opinion represented "sahishnu Hinduism" (jayishnu means aggressive, triumphant, while sahishnu means tolerant, forbearing). The term Maharashtra dharma occurs for the first time in Guru Charitra, a 15th century Marathi work, but Maharashtra dharma here has a different connotation from the one suggested by Ranade and Rajwade; it means an ethical policy of a great enlightened state.

It was Rāmdās, a 17th century Maratha saint poet, who identified Maharashtra dharma with political antipathy to the Turko-Afghan-Mughal rule. That a strong current of militant Hindu revivalism was animating the minds of Maratha watandars and their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 350.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For an outline of Maratha polity see Satish Chandra, "The Maratha Polity and Its Agrarian Consequences" in *Ideas in History*, ed, Bisheshwar Prasad (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963). The article sums up the researches of earlier scholars.

<sup>3</sup> Azad Bilgrami, quoted by Irfan Habib, op. cit., p. 349.

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brahmin mentors cannot be denied. In a violent and eloquent outburst of poetry Rāmdās called upon his contemporary Marathas:

The land should either be drowned or trodden upon for the establishment of dharma. All the Marathas should be brought under one unified command with a view to spread Maharashtra dharma.1

In a book of verses, Anandavanabhuvana, Rāmdās saw the vision of Maharashtra dharma being realized in his own lifetime. He declared:

> A great evil has fallen upon the Mlecchas. God has become the partisan of the virtuous in the anandavanabhuvana (region of bliss). Hindusthan has waxed strong.2

A feeling of hostility towards the ruling class is an in-built propensity in the psychological make-up of any people. The Mughal rulers in north India and Bahmani Sultans in the Deccan were cut off from the Indian masses by many barriers. There were many elements in the ranks of the Turko-Afghan and Mughal nobility which were looked upon by the Hindu masses as mlecchas with no local roots.3 In medieval India this popular feeling of hostility towards the ruling class occasionally used to degenerate into a feeling of religious antipathy. The Maratha watandars from Shivājī to Bājīrāo II made the fullest use of this popular propensity. The Maratha feeling of hostility to the Mughal hegemony is an example of a social tension that assumed racial overtones. Robbing the rich for the benefit of the poor is an instinct of all primitive rebellions. Shivajī's campaigns of mulukhgīrī into Mughal territories were plundering campaigns against rich emporiums and must have thrilled the hearts of the "naked rascals". Shivaji was shrewd enough to exploit this primitive instinct. Thus Shivajī and his successors could enlist the Maratha bargīrs and shiledars in the mulukhgīrī campaigns on the basis of an appeal to their predatory instinct and religious ethos. The overwhelming religious feeling of the Maratha population centred round the deities Tulajā Bhavānī, Vithobā and Mahādeva. The battle cry of the Marathas "Har Har Mahādeva" touched the religious ethos of the Maratha peasantry.

That Shivaji appealed to the Hindu religious sentiments and Maratha pride is borne out by a number of contemporary documents. 4 Bhūshan's laudatory verses equate Shivājī with Indian epic heroes and credit him with having saved Hinduism from extinction. The passion for Hindavī swarāj, however, did not prevent Shivājī from admiring Akbar for his policy of religious tolerance and broad outlook. The subordinate position to which the non-Muslims were reduced during the rule of the Turko-Afghan and Mughal nobles inevitably rankled in the hearts of the Hindu élite in medieval India. But Hindu hostility to Muslim

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. N. K. Behere, The Background of Maratha Renaissance (Bangalore, 1946), p. 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. R. D. Ranade, Pathway to God in Marathi Literature (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1961),

For the social composition of the Mughal nobility see M. Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb (Bombay, 1966), pp. 11-33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Shivāji's letter to Dādāji Narasā Prabhu in V. K. Rajwade, Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane, xv, 272;

Shivāji's letter to Aurangzeb protesting against the imposition of Jeziya in D. V. Apte and R. V. Oturkar, Sadhan Parichaya (Poona, 1963), p. 30.

hegemony was not the primary motivating factor nor the dynamic element of medieval Indian political scene. To stress that religion represented the primary and dynamic element in the Maratha-Mughal relations is a case of what Romila Thapar calls "historical back projection", whereby sanction is sought for contemporary prejudices from the so-called historical precedents.

With all the Maratha talk of Maharashtra dharma and Hindavī swarāj the actual transactions of the Maratha state were invaribly free from religious motivations. The religious policies of the predecessors of the Maratha rulers had ranged from tolerance and syncretism of Akbar to the bigotry and fanaticism of Aurangzeb. Religious tolerance had been practised to a considerable degree by the Bahmani rulers and the coexistence of various communities and creeds had been a long-standing feature of the social life of the Deccan under them. The Marathas acquired this heritage. The geo-political considerations also impelled them to continue the traditions of religious tolerance and accommodation. The Maratha rulers, however, exploited the popular Hindu feeling against the Mughal nobles. Anti-Islamic ideological slant of the Maharashtra dharma was only a projection of the social interests of the Maratha watan holders that clashed with the interests of the Mughal nobility. The irony and hollowness of the ideology of Maharashtra dharma were laid bare when the Maratha sardārs crossed the boundaries of their homeland and began collecting chauth and sardeshmukhī with the Mughal imperial seal.

To sum up, Maharashtra dharma was a psychological tonic administered by the Maratha wat and ars in the initial phase of upheaval to rouse the toiling Maratha peasants for an active mobilization against the Mughal rulers who represented the citadel of various types of oppression. It degenerated later into a plea for Maratha exactions of chauth and sardeshmukhū which constituted nothing but legalized plunder that finally resulted in alienating the Marathas from other nationalities of India. This is the genesis and irony of Maharashtra dharma, the social content of which smacked of nothing but feudal exactions—a point often neglected by the nationalist Maratha historiography.

# SOME ASPECTS OF INDIAN VILLAGE SOCIETY IN NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE 18TH CENTURY

The Position and Role of the khud-kāsht and pāhī-kāsht\*

### Satish Chandra

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Since the beginning of the 19th century, if not earlier, considerable attention has been devoted by administrators and scholars to understand the structure and functioning of Indian village society. Interest in the subject has continued and evoked a lively controversy among scholars. While the view that the Indian villages were "petty Republics" is not accepted, there can be little doubt that the village was an administrative and revenue unit in medieval India and that a study of the structure and working of village society is vital for an understanding of the evolution of Indian society during the period.

The study of agrarian life and conditions during the medieval period in India, particularly the nature of zamīndārī rights, has received considerable attention from Indian scholars during recent times.<sup>2</sup> These studies have shown that while the possession of land vested in the individual peasants, in reality possession implied the right to the fruits produced by land. It will be seen that the medieval Indian concept of ownership in land was similar in many respects to the medieval European concept.<sup>3</sup> It could imply collective

- \* Based on a paper read at the International Congress of Orientalists, XXIX Session, Paris, 16-22 July 1973.
- <sup>1</sup> Recent publications include A. R. Desai, Rural Sociology in India (Bombay, 1961); Oremstein Henry, Gaon-conflict and Cohesion in an Indian Village (Princeton University, 1965); S. C. Gupta, Agrarian Relations and the Early British Rule in India (Delhi, 1964) and "The Village Community and its Disintegration in UP in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries", Seminar on Indian Economic History (Delhi, 1961); B. M. Batra, "Disintegration of Village Communities", Seminar on Indian Economic History; B. R. Grover, "The Concept of Village Community in North India during the Mughal Age and the pre-British Era", Seminar paper, Indian Institute of Advanced Study (Simla, 1964). Recent Soviet studies on the subject include the works of I. M. Reisner, L. B. Alaev, K. A. Antanova, E. N. Komarov, G. G. Kotovsky, etc., to cite only a few. (For bibliography see A. I. Chicherov, India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries, Moscow, 1971).
- <sup>2</sup> See in particular S. Nurul Hasan, "The Position of the Zamindars in Mughal Empire", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, iv (Delhi, 1964), 107-19; "Three Studies of the Zamindari System", Medieval India: A Miscellany, i (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1968), 233-9; "Aspects of Zamindari System in the Deccan", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (Varanasi, 1969), pp. 262-6; Thoughts on Agrarian Relations in Mughal India (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973); Irfan Habib, Agrarian System of Mughal India (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963); B. R. Grover, "Nature of Land Rights in Mughal India", IESHR, i (1963), 1-23; "Nature of Dehat-i-Taaluqa and Evolution of the Taaluqdari System during the Mughal India" IESHR, ii, no. 3 (1965), Publishing House, Bombay, 1971), S. Chandra. Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740 (Aligarh, 1959, 2nd edn, New Delhi, 1971).
- <sup>a</sup> Cf. S. Nurul Hasan, Thoughts on Agrarian Relations in Mughal India, pp. 3-4. Marc Bloch says: "It is

use or the right of different parties to a share of the produce. It was alien to the capitalist idea of exclusive control and of the right to use or abuse. Secondly, these studies have underlined the close linkage of zamīndārī rights with the settlement pattern of castes and clans on the land. Zamīndārs, it has been shown, were often drawn from dominant castes or clans, and the nature of their rights in land varied with the nature of caste/clan rights. Due to the purchase of zamīndārī rights, particularly from the 16th century onwards, administrative appointments to zamīndārīs by rulers tended to undermine or weaken the clan rights, as also the rights of the village birādarī or community. In this context feudal control over land was becoming more pronounced.

The purpose of the present paper is to analyse the position of different classes of cultivators who formed the overwhelming majority in the villages. It does not purport to deal with the zamīndārs, deshmukhs, pātis, etc., or with what have been called jajmānī rights, i.e., the relationship between the cultivating and non-cultivating classes.<sup>3</sup>

Late medieval documents, particularly the Rajasthani and Marathi ones, as well as the early British documents enable us to form a fairly clear idea of the rights and obligations of various classes of cultivators and their role in agricultural production. These documents speak of two main classes of cultivators, the khud-kāsht and the pāhī-kāsht. There is little doubt that these represented traditional divisions, the khud-kāsht being the Persian version of the thāni (Sanskrit sthānika) or the resident-cultivator. The word pāhī is apparently an Indian word. It was well known in medieval times and is referred to as early as the 16th century in the writings of the Hindi poet, Tulsīdās. In Maharashtra the words used for these two categories were thalwāhik or mirāsī and uparī or gutkulī or kulwārī. In Rajasthan the words used were gavetī or gharuhala and pāhī. The British found

very rare, during the whole of the feudal era, for anyone to speak of ownership, either of an estate or of an office.... For nearly all land and a great many human beings were burdened at this time with a multiplicity of obligations differing in their nature but all apparently of equal importance. None implied that fixed proprietary exclusiveness which belonged to the conception of ownership in Roman Law" (Feudal Society, London, 1967, pp. 115-6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, pp. 162-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.; also pp. 181-2.

A great deal of attention has been paid, particularly by sociologists, to analyse this problem at the village level. See for instance T.O. Beidelman, A Comparative Analysis of the Jajmani System (New York, 1959); Edward B. Harper, "The System of Economic Exchange in India, American Anthropologist, 1xi (1959); David F. Pocock, "Note on Jajmani Relationship", Contributions to Indian Sociology, no. 6 (December 1962); P. M. Kolenda, "Toward a Model of the Hindu Jajmani System", Human Organization, xxii, no. 1 (Spring 1963). However, it should be remembered that the non-cultivating sections (called balutedār in western India, ayagar in south India, and khidmatī paria or kāmin in north India) formed only a small part of the village population, the agriculturists forming the large majority. For a recent review of the vast literature on the subject see John Adams and Uwe J. Woltenmade, "Studies of Indian Village Economics", IESHR, vii, no. 1 (1970), 109-37. It conspicuously leaves out the Soviet writings on the subject.

Savitri Chandra, "Social Life in the Age of Akbar as Depicted in the Works of Tulsidas", Paper presented at the Seminar on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Fatehpur Sikri, 2-3 December 1972. In one version of Khwaja Yasin's Glossary of administrative and revenue terms, written in the second half of the 18th century, pāhī is called a Hindi word (Purnea MS. f. 53b), but in another version (Br. Mus, Add MS. 6603, f. 52a) the word is pāi' kāsht and is called a Persian word. In Steingass's Persian-English Dictionary the word is spelt in the same way, but its origin is not given.

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similar classification in Bengal. Thus these categories were not confined to a particular region, but were found all over north India. It is likely that similar sections among the cultivators existed in south India also.

The word khud-kāsht is self-explanatory. It means cultivation by peasants themselves, evidently with the help of their family labour, of lands which they owned. There is little doubt that ownership of land on a hereditary basis by large sections of the peasantry was an old and well-established tradition, as was recognized in the  $\bar{A}$ 'in. A late 18th century revenue manual2 defines the khud-kāsht as "one who, having paid himself the money (zar) for (the purchase of) oxen etc., gets the cultivation done by the peasants (n'aya). ... He is the opposite of pāhī-kāsht, that is, one who has a house in the land of his zamīndārī and who engages in cultivation there is called khud-kāsht". It sums it up by saying, "if the owner of land (mālik-i-zamīn) cultivates his own land, he is called khud-kāsht". Thus the ownership of land he cultivates and of the oxen and other means of cultivation as well as having a house within the zamīndārī are the characteristic features of a khud-kāsht. This is certainly the cultivator to whom Warren Hastings referred in a note dated 12 November 1776. He says:

It is to be observed also that there are two kinds of Riatts: the more valuable are those who reside in one fixed spot, where they have built themselves substantial houses, or derived them by Inheritance from their fathers. These men will suffer much before they will abandon their habitations, and therefore, they are made to suffer much. But once forced to quit them they become vagrant

After the conquest of the Peshwa's territories in 1815 Elphinstone ordered a special enquiry into the various tenures, particularly the mirās tenure, which, as we have noted, may be equated to the khud-kāsht tenure. Capt. Briggs, Political Agent in Khandesh, explained the position as follows:

The Wattandars, or Mirasi Rayat, hold their land of right: it is also hereditary, saleable, or transferable and on the occasion of its alienation from the family title-deeds are made out and witnessed not only by the military authorities but the Deshmukhs of the district and several of the surrounding Patils are called upon to be present at the transaction. The Wattandars adhere to their lands and village in spite of oppression and cruelty provided their land tenure is not interfered with. . . . 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Abu'l Fazl, A'în-i-Akbarî, tr., Jarrett, ii, 55-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Khwaja Yasin's Glossary, Purnea MS. ff. 72b, 53b (Rotograph copy, Department of History, Aligarh

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Hastings Papers, British Museum, European Add. MSS. 19090.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Briggs, Letter to Elphinstone dated 22 December 1815, quoted in Selections from the Minutes and Official Writings of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, ed, G. W. Forrest (London, 1884), p. 386. This, however, was not accounted by all and the Principle of the Principle however, was not accepted by all sections of the British who were swayed by the idea that the zamindars were the sole owners of land. Sir John Shore described them in 1789 as cultivators who "by long occupancy acquire a right of possession in the soil and are not subject to be removed but this right does not authorise them to sell or mortgage it, and it is so far distinct from a right of

Elphinstone added that they paid a fixed land tax to the government and that they were never dispossessed while they paid their tax "and even then, they have for a long period (at least thirty years) the right of reclaiming their estate, on paying the dues of government".1

Thus a khud-kāsht or a mirāsdār was a peasant who owned the land he cultivated and the oxen and other means of cultivation, had resided for a long time in the village or rather the zamīndārī in which he had his own habitation, could sell, transfer or bequeath his land, and was not ejected as long as he paid the land revenue. The right to resume his lands after a long absence, provided he cleared his dues, is referred to in Aurangzeb's farmān addressed to Muḥammad Hashim. The mālik-i-zamīn referred to in the document apparently signify the khud-kāsht peasants.<sup>2</sup>

As far as the payment of land revenues is concerned, the khud-kāsht or mirāsdār paid land revenue at a concessional rate or revenue which had been fixed by custom. In theory it could not be increased. In practice it would depend upon the bargaining power of the mirāsdārs, the nature of the government, availability of land, etc. Thus we are told that the Marathas had loaded the mirāsdār with various extra imposts, raising the land revenue in effect to about half.<sup>3</sup>

The khud-kāsht right of the peasant to have his lands cultivated by others is a moot question. According to some Rajasthani documents, the local officials were especially instructed not to permit this; since the khud-kāsht paid revenue at a concessional rate this would have meant loss of revenue to the state. Hired help could, however, be taken on some special occasion such as the harvest season. Khwaja Yasin, however, says that if a khud-kāsht gave his oxen, etc., and got his lands cultivated by peasants (ri'āya) the latter would get only one-seventh of the produce. In view of the availability of cultivable waste-land in the country such peasants may not have been very numerous, or it may have been difficult to keep them on the land. They would have almost certainly belonged to the low castes which were normally not allowed to own or cultivate land.

property" (Quoted by W. W. Hunter, Bengal Records, i, 50-1). H. H. Wilson defines khud-kāsht as "a resident cultivator, one cultivating his own hereditary lands, either under a zamindar or as a coparcener in a village. In Bengal, one class of them, holding their lands at fixed rates by hereditary right, sometimes sublet them, except the part about their dwelling, in which they continue to reside, and although ceasing to cultivate, and engaged in trade or business they retain their designation of khud-kāsht. The term is also applied in north-western provinces to lands which the proprietor, or the payer of the the government revenue, cultivates himself" (A Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms of British India, 2nd edn, Delhi, 1968, p. 267. Emphasis mine).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 278.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Aurangzeb's farmān to Muḥammad Hashim, text in JASB, New Series, ii (1906), 238-49.

<sup>3</sup> Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 278.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Chithis to the 'Amil Pargana Fagi, Samwat 1780/A.D. 1723; the 'Amil Pargana Maujabad, d. Bhadwa 6, V. S. 1815/22 Sept. 1758; from Dīwān Murlīdhar to the 'Amil Pargana Rampura, d. Sawan Sudi 2, 1812/9 August 1755; d Bhadwa Vadi 3, 1813/29 Sept. 1756; to the 'Amil Pargana Malarana, d. Bhadwa Sudi 8, 1817/5 Sept. 1760 (Diwan Huzuri Daftar, Jaipur Section, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Khwaja Yasin's Glossary, Purnea MS. f. 72b

From the above it would appear that as long as there was plenty of cultivable wasteland available and the state officials were vigilant conditions were not propitious for a khud-kāsht to develop into a capitalist farmer cultivating his land with the help of hired labour. The essential feature of the khud-kāsht tenure was the cultivation of the land owned by the peasant himself with the help of family labour and ploughs and bullocks owned by him.

The khud-kāsht enjoyed other rights which made his tenure a valuable one. Sometimes he was exempt, partially or wholly, from various imposts payable to the pātils, such as tax on marriages. Nor did he pay any house tax as long as he had only one habitation in the village. He was, however, generally not exempt from the gaon kharch or cesses levied to meet various village expenses such as maintenance of the temple, expense on officials, entertainment, etc.,1 the exact situation varying greatly. As W. W. Hunter observed:

Th khud-kāsht right was a valued right, not only because it implied an economic advantage, but because it conferred a certain social status. The Resident cultivators formed the governing body of the village commune, its bhadralok or respectable class. As such they had not only a good social standing and a power of borrowing from the village money-lender, but also a number of communal privileges in regard to their homestead plots, and to the pasture and forest lands, to the water reservoir and fisheries, to the services of the village servants or officials, and to the pick of the field left unoccupied.2

In the second place, they held as a rule more land than they were assessed for in the village register. Harrington, the Collector of the Jessore district, wrote in 1776 that "the normal rate was Rs 3 per bigha, but the actual rate only 1 rupee as the raiyats possess fifteen bighas when their pattas state only five, and upon the last quantity the assessment of three rupees is made".3 According to an earlier British observer in western India, mirās tenure was also valued because of its "civic honours and outward means of distinction. The priority of place in an assembly, at a festival, or in a procession and the right of sitting in municipal council are inestimable marks of distinction to a people among whom there is so little property. ... "4

Along with these privileges the khud-kāsht had at least two obligations. In common with other cultivators, it was considered a duty to the state to cultivate as much land as they could. Refusal to do so without a valid reason could invite punishment. 5 Secondly,

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<sup>1</sup> R. N. Gooddine, Report on the Village Communities of the Deccan (Bombay, 1852) in Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government, no. iv, 8-9; Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 280. Gooddine divides the mirāsdār tenure into three categories on the basis of its total, partial or non-exemption from imposts (See Appearance Lot the categories). imposts (See Annexure I at the end of article).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bengal Records, i, 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Harrington's analysis quoted in Zamindary Settlement of Bengal, i, Appendix 5, 103 (W. W. Hunter,

<sup>4</sup> Gooddine, op. cit., p. 8.

Aurangzeb's farman to Muhammad Hashim, loc. cit. (translated into English by J. N. Sarkar, Mughal Administration, Calcutta, 1935, p. 199). See also Pottinger's letter in Elphinstone, Official Writings,

they were collectively responsible for the payment of the land revenue. If any khud-kāsht or mirāsdār defaulted, his dues would fall on the other mirāsdārs. If he left his village due to non-payment, his fields could be leased out to someone else "usually not exceeding three years till the expiration of which the mirāsdār cannot claim restitution". As we have noted, he could return even after 30 years to reclaim his lands provided he cleared his dues.

This brings us to the second category of cultivators, the "vagrant Riatts" of Warren Hastings or the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}-k\bar{a}sht$ . The Fifth Report defined the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}-k\bar{a}sht$  as those who "cultivate lands belonging to a village where they do not reside, they are considered tenants-at-will and having only a temporary accidental interest in the soil they cultivate" (Emphasis mine). The definition is significant, for it was the situation which the British found and in the creation of which they had a big hand. For the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}$  was by no means a tenant-at-will before the arrival of the British. According to an early 18th century Persian text, the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}$  had the same rights in the land he cultivated as the khud-kāsht peasant. In other words, he could bequeath, alienate or mortgage the lands he cultivated. But this itself is an oversimplification. It would seem that the rights of the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}$ s differed from area to area on the basis of concrete conditions.

According to Yasin's Glossary,  $p\bar{a}h\bar{u}$  means one who is "the peasant (ra'iyat) in one mauza' and is subordinate to one zamindari and carries on cultivation in the zamindari of another zamindar''.<sup>4</sup> This is a fundamental distinction which has often been underplayed or lost sight of. Since  $zam\bar{u}nd\bar{a}r\bar{u}s$  often represented tribal or clan settlements or an area in which land was cultivated by one or more dominant castes, a person who moved out of it became an outsider. But this did not happen if he moved within the  $zam\bar{u}nd\bar{u}r\bar{i}$ , i.e., the region which had a common tribal/clan or caste configuration. Thus even if a peasant resided in one village, but cultivated land in another village belonging to the same  $zam\bar{u}nd\bar{u}r\bar{i}$ , he would not be considered a  $p\bar{u}h\bar{u}$ . In Maharashtra such peasants were called owandk $\bar{u}r\bar{i}$ .

The  $p\bar{a}h\bar{i}s$  were divisible into two main categories. One comprised those who tilled the khud-k $\bar{a}sht$  land belonging to  $p\bar{a}tils$  and the  $in^c\bar{a}m$  lands held by  $zam\bar{i}nd\bar{a}rs$  or by  $madad-i-m^c\bar{a}sh$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Letter of Capt. Grant, Political Agent at Satara, dt. 17 Aug. 1819, in Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 398.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W. K. Firminger (ed), Fifth Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company, July 1812, ii,57. See also B. H. Baden-Powell, The Land System of British India, i (Oxford, 1892), 599.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Quoted by B. R. Grover, "Nature of Land Rights in Mughal India", IESHR, i (1963), 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Br. Mu. Add, 6603 f. 52a. In the Purnea MS. f. 53a the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{t}$  is identified as "a peasant  $(ra^i iyat)$  resident of a mauza" (who) cultivates the land in another mauza"...he cultivates the land of another and belongs to the category of  $ra^i iyat$   $g\bar{i}r\bar{t}$  (tan ba  $ra^i iyat$   $g\bar{i}r\bar{t}$   $\bar{a}yad$ ). From the above it would appear that by this time the word  $ra^i iyat$  and  $ra^i iyat$ - $g\bar{i}r\bar{t}$  had begun to be identified with a tenant cultivator, i.e., one who did not own the land he cultivated.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> It would appear that much of the misunderstanding has been caused by the English rendering of the word  $p\bar{a}h\bar{t}$  as a non-resident cultivator in contradistinction to the *khud-kāsht* who was termed a resident cultivator.

<sup>6</sup> Gooddine, op. cit., p. 3.

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In some regions not merely social but caste taboos prevented the zamīndārs from putting their hands to the plough. It would appear that sufficient numbers of landless persons were available in medieval times for taking up the cultivation of the lands of such zamīndārs. Such cultivators could retain their holdings as long as they wished on condition of regular payment of land revenue. Or they could be given a strip of land for their maintenance and were in return required to cultivate the lands of the zamīndārs. Pāhīs of this type often did not have their own accessories for cultivation: the ploughs, bullocks and seeds were supplied or rented out to them by the superior sections in village society, such as the muqaddams, zamīndārs, mahājans, etc.² They were apparently prepared to move from place to place in search of better terms. There is some reason to believe that these cultivators were generally assessed on the basis of batāī,³ i.e., on the produce, whereas the mirās tenure implied payment on fixed rates, which often but not always implied measurement.

The third and perhaps the most important and numerous category of the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{i}s$  comprised those who had their own ploughs and bullocks. Such  $p\bar{a}l\bar{i}s$  were welcome to take up cultivation of cultivable waste land or to repopulate a village which had been wholly or partially deserted due to natural or man-made calamities. Pargana records from Rajasthan as well as Marathi records throw a good deal of light on the process by which villages were repopulated or the cultivation extended. It seems that the  $p\bar{a}tils$  or muqaddams and  $p\bar{a}h\bar{i}s$  played a crucial role in this. Thus in the case of village Mauza Maharajpur which had been deserted the village  $p\bar{a}til$  was asked to settle in the village and give an undertaking that he would bring the entire land in the village under the plough. He was granted a patta (lease) on concessional terms, the land-revenue being settled at one-third of the produce for a period of three years. He, in turn, settled the village by bringing in  $p\bar{a}h\bar{i}-k\bar{a}sht$  to whon he gave land at the rate of one-third of the produce for the current year. In another village the new as $\bar{a}mis$  were asked to pay at the rate of one-third for bringing cultivable waste land (banjar) under cultivation, but at the normal rate of two-fifths for polaj (the best quality) land.

The percentage allowed varied from region to region from five to 25 per cent. See Irfan Habib, Agrarian System, p. 139. For western India see Elphistone, Official Writings, p. 283. It is possible that these in ām lands, which were considered the property of the zamīndār, began to be called sīr in due course. Tenants who cultivated sīr lands were not allowed to acquire hereditary rights. The silahdārs (soldiers) also sometimes left their lands to uparis for cultivation (Elphinstone, op, cit., p. 400).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chithi to the 'Amil Pargana Hindaun, d. Jeth Vadi 9, 1812/21 June 1755; to the 'Amil Pargana Maujabad, d. Bhadwa Vadi 9, 1815/25 Sept. 1758. Diwan Huzuri Dafter, Jaipur Section, R. S. A.,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Capt. Grant from Satara, 1819, in Elphinstone's Official Writings, pp. 401-2. It is, however, estimated that the cultivator got for himself only one-fourth of the produce, excluding wear and tear of the implements, purchase of cattle and finding their subsistence, etc. The division was made after setting taken out of the pātils, kulkarnīs, balutedārs and next year's seeds. The rest of the huq dues were \$\frac{4}{3}\text{Vādzītar}\$.

<sup>4</sup> Yāddāshtī documents, Diwan Huzuri Daftar, Jaipur Section, R. S. A., Bikaner, quoted by

 $P\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  of this type were normally attracted from neighbouring villages. They were allowed to make their hutments (chhaparbandi) in the village. They generally brought their ploughs for cultivation. In some village documents from eastern Rajasthan, these  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  are listed caste-wise, indicating the number of ploughs belonging to people from various castes. In one such document we are told that 163  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  brought 185 ploughs: of these 46 persons belonged to the three upper castes and owned 58 ploughs; 20 belonged to the lower castes and owned 24 ploughs, while the remaining 93 persons belonging to miscellaneous castes owned 103 ploughs. It would appear that on balance the upper castes had more ploughs and more land at their disposal and that the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  of this category did not belong to the lower castes alone.

Pāhīs who had their own implements for cultivation were important in the growth, expansion and even the normal functioning of the village society. It was one of the important duties of the village headman (pātil or muqaddam) to bring new land under cultivation or to induce pāhīs to cultivate land abandoned by mirāsīs. This he did by offering them attractive terms. These terms could be of two types: one based on qaul or lease was progressive, the normal rate being paid during the third or fourth year. The second was called istawah or muqtaf. It was meant for the clearance of waste lands and paid only a nominal rent. Istawah tenure was open to both mirāsdārs and uparīs. It was a contract for a long period at the end of which the holder paid the full rate. By this means an uparī or a pāhī could acquire khud-kāsht rights. In some areas an uparī could acquire mirās rights by paying a nazrāna, i.e., a stipulated sum of money. Elsewhere, he may be allowed to convert his lands into mirās if he had uparī land and was not disturbed in his holding by the mirāsdārs for 60 or perhaps a hundred years. In any case they were not disturbed in their holdings as long as they paid the land revenue and could bequeath though not sell or transfer them.<sup>3</sup>

The khud-kāsht and the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}s$  formed the large majority in the village. A third class of cultivators were those who had no interest in land or crops. They were labourers who were

paid daily wages. Their numbers were small.4

It is very difficult for us in the present state of our knowledge to form even a rough estimate of the proportion of khud- $k\bar{a}sht$  and  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}s$  in different parts of the country or the size and extent of their holdings. According to Rajasthani records, the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}s$  were absent from many villages and were generally less numerous than the khud- $k\bar{a}sht$ . From a  $y\bar{a}dd\bar{a}sht\bar{\iota}s$  of pargana Pidayan for the year V.S. 1783/A.D.1726 (see Appendix I for details) it

Satish Chandra and Dilbagh Singh in "Structure and Stratification in the Village Society in Eastern Rajasthan", a paper presented at the 33rd ssession of the Indian History Congress, Muzaffarpur, 1972. See also Shiv Charitra Sahitya 3:427; Marathanchya Itihasanchi Sadhanen, xviii, 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Yāddāshtī Pardakhti Gaon Pargana Malarana, d. V. S. 1783 /A.D. 1726, Diwan Huzuri Daftar, Jaipur Section, R. S. A., Bikaner, quoted by S. Chandra and Dilbagh Singh, op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Capt. Pottinger, Provisional Collector of Ahmadnagar, letter dt. 15 Jan. 1819, Elphinstone, Official Writings, pp. 388-90. See also Shiv Charitra Sahitya, 8:84; Ravinder Kumar, Western India in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1968), p. 26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Capt. Grant's letter dt. 17 Aug. 1817, Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 406.

<sup>4</sup> Elphinstone, Official Writings, p. 387.

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appears that there were no  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  in five out of the 20 villages in the pargana, while 10 villages had only one to four  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  each. Of the remaining five villages four had seven to 10  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  each; only one which was the largest village in the pargana and is called qasba had over 20  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  (actually 22 out of 114 cultivators). Thus there were 75  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}s$  in all out of a total of 393 cultivators, i.e., 19 per cent. of the total.\(^1\) In the former territories of the Peshwa in Maharashtra there were some regions such as Karnatak where there were no  $mir\bar{a}sd\bar{a}rs$ . In Khandesh  $upar\bar{\imath}s$  were to be found only in areas which had once belonged to the Ahmadnagar kingdom; in Satara there were no  $upar\bar{\imath}s$ .\(^2\)

A later study made by Gooddine for the Kumbhari division of the Patoda taluqa in Poona district (See Appendix II) shows that out of 34 villages 16 did not have any gutkulī (uparī or pāhī); five villages had one or two of them, nine had more than two but less than 20 pāhīs each, only four of them had more than 20 pāhīs each. There was no village without a mirāsdār. The gutkulīs, however, come to 24 per cent. of the total. As far as the holding of land was concerned, 968 mirāsdārs held 128,300 bighas of land or on an average 132 bighas per person, whereas 226 gutkulīs (uparīs or pāhīs) held 23,875 bighas which gives an average of 105.6 bighas per person.³ In pargana Pidayan in eastern Rajasthan the average holding came to 49 bighas per cultivator.⁴

It will be seen from the above that the agricultural situation varied considerably from region to region. Around the Poona area in Maharashtra in the middle of the 19th century the average holding of a mirāsdār was higher than that of a gutkulī. On an average a mirāsdār had more land than a chahur, i.e., land which he could cultivate with four ploughs. A portion of it was thus available for renting out or being cultivated with the help of hired labour. But it would not be possible to generalize this experience. Earlier, Captain Syckes in his study of village Ambola found that the holdings of uparīs were comparable in area and productivity to the majority of the thalwāhiks (mirāsdār or khud-kāsht). In

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Yāddāshtī Hal-bail Pargana Pidayan, V. S. 1783/A.D. 1726, Diwan Huzuri Daftar, R. S. A., Bikaner (Appendix I). It may be noted that 75 pāhīs had 79½ ploughs and 159 oxen among them, that is, slightly more than one plough and two oxen each. The position of the gavetīs was slightly better, 318 of them having 347½ ploughs and 694 oxen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Elphinstone, Official Writings, pp. 385-410.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> It would appear that the average holding of a mirāsdār was slightly larger than a chahur or land sufficient for four bullocks (i. e., four ploughs) to cultivate. In area a chahur was 120 bighas (Gooddine, op. cit., p. 6). A standard bigha was 0.59 acre in the 17th century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See Appendix I. We have excluded two villages where figures for the cultivated area are not available. The unit of cultivation for a plough with two bullocks varied from area to area depending upon the nature of the soil and the quality of the bullocks. The average holding is not directly related to the area under cultivation. The Yāddāshtī also gives figures for the area under cultivation in each village in the winter and summer seasons and the area in fallow. This, however, does not give an adequate idea of the actual inequality among these cultivators. Thus a few of them had up to four oxen, a few others had two to three oxen: the percentage of these "richer" peasants comes to about 10, Diwan Huzuri Daftar, Jaipur Section, R. S. A., Bikaner.

Labourers were generally paid by being assigned a strip of land in return for their labour. They were thus not wage labourers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Tabular View of the Distribution of Village Lands in the Village of Ambola, Poona Collectorate": Appendix to Major Syckes' report on Poona District, dt. nil: R. D. vol. 154B of 1826, quoted by Ravinder Kumar, op. cit., p. 20.

eastern Rajasthan the average holding of 49 bighas (including fallow) was as much as could be cultivated with one plough and two bullocks. But, as we have seen, in many villages the average holding seems to have been much less, almost half of the average.

It would seem that relations between the *khud-kāsht* and the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{\iota}s$ , particularly their economic position, depended upon a number of factors including the proportion in numbers between the two, the total land available for cultivation in a village, and the strength and position of the  $zam\bar{\iota}nd\bar{a}r$ . As Warren Hastings states:

The vagrant Riatts have it in their power in some measure to make their own terms with the zamindars. They make land at an under rent, hold it for one season, the zamindars then increase the rent or exact more than their agreement, and the Riatts either desert, or if they continue they hold their land at a rent lower than the established rate of the country. Thus, the Ancient and Industrious Tenants are obliged to submit to undue exactions, while the vagrant Riatts enjoy lands at half price, which operates as an encouragement to desertion, and to the depopulation of the country.<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of experience in Orissa, where the medieval system continued till late, another perceptive British administrator observed:

In thickly populated provinces, or wherever there were more cultivators than there was land for them to till, the customary rates paid by the  $khud-k\bar{a}sht$  cultivators were lower than the rates at which an outsider could obtain a holding. In thinly populated districts, or wherever there was more land than there were cultivators to till it, an outsider cultivator could obtain a holding at lower rate than the customary rates paid by the  $khud-k\bar{a}sht$  cultivators.

So long as the land on an estate continued to be twice as much as the hereditary peasantry could till, the resident husbandmen were of too much importance to be bullied or squeezed into discontent. But once a large body of immigrant cultivators had grown up, this primitive check upon the landlords' exactions was removed.

The migratory tenants, therefore, not only lost the position in their old villages, but they were harassed in their new settlements. Worse than all, they were to a certain extent confounded with the landless low castes, who destitute of their local connections so keenly prized in a rural society on the evidence of respectability wandered about as hired labourers and temporary cultivators of surplus village lands....<sup>2</sup>

It follows from the above that as long as there was plenty of land available the  $p\bar{a}hl$  cultivator could bargain and become the proprietor  $(m\bar{a}lik)$  of the land he cultivated. Once pressure on land increased, the position of the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{t}$  worsened, and he quickly sank to the position of a tenant-at-will. During the medieval period where land was relatively surplus the distinction between the khud-kasht and the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{t}$  did not become rigid; one could easily be

<sup>1</sup> Hastings Papers, British Museum, European Add. MS. 19090.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W. W. Hunter, Bengal Records, i, 52; Orissa (London, 1872), pp. 58-9.

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he be transformed into the other. Absence of a rigid demarcation among different classes of peasants as among the zamindars imparted a great flexibility to the feudal system in India without, however, modifying it in essence. Among other things it also provided an escape, though in a limited measure, from the oppressions of the caste system : men of the lower castes could and sometimes did take advantage of the contradictions in the situation to found new villages or bring cultivable waste land under cultivation and acquire proprietary rights in land. Alternatively, they could migrate to the towns where they could hope to escape to some extent from the limitations of the caste system.

The development of Indian society during the 18th century has to be judged in this context. It has now been accepted even by Western scholars that emphasis on village self-sufficiency misled many scholars in the past into postulating medieval Indian society as being based on some kind of natural economy. 1 The rapid growth of towns, the development of a national market in certain types of commodities, the growing involvement of India in the international market and the consequent growth of commodity production, particularly in the coastal areas, and the increasing penetration of money economy into village life are some of the features of the 17th century India.

Some historians have spoken of the village community "gradually disintegrating" in the 18th century due to deepening property inequality, spread of commodity-money relations, erosion of the position of the "hereditary landholders", the growth of a "feudalising" élite among the rich members of the community, etc.2 It is quite true that the Indian village could not remain unaffected by the growth of money economy and accumulation of money capital in the country. The state, the zamīndārs, the mahājans and the village headmen including men of substance who had numerous ploughs (such people were called hal-mīrs) provided capital as well as organization for the expansion of cultivation. A part of it was used for shifting from low grade crops to high grade crops. This included not only a great production of cash crops, but also a change in the proportion of winter (rabi) crops such as wheat and summer (kharīf) crops.3 Accumulation of capital by mahājans who acted as money changers, money-lenders, grain dealers and as guarantors of various transactions is another significant development during the 18th century.4 The precise role of these various sections and their impact on the agrarian economy of the country has yet to be assessed. There is little evidence to prove that the number of khud-kāsht peasants markedly decreased in India during the 18th century, which would have implied the weakening, if not the disintegration, of the village community. In the absence of such precise information the British administrators put forward various

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Satish Chandra, "Growth of Money Economy in India during the 17th Century", IESHR, iv no. 4 (1965), I.C. The Money of Murkel iv, no. 4 (1965); Irfan Habib, "Potentiality of Capitalistic Development in the Economy of Mughal India", Enquiry (Winter 1971), pp.1-56. See also Morris D. Morris "Towards a Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History", JEH, xxiii, no. 4 (1963), 606-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. A. I. Chicherov, India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries, pp. 17-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S. N. Hasan, K. N. Hasan and S. P. Gupta, "The Pattern of Agricultural Production in the Territories of Amber, c. 1650—1750" Procs. IHC (1966), pp. 149-63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See Dilbagh Singh, "Ijaredary System in Eastern Rajasthan", Paper presented at the sixth session of Rajasthan History Congress (Beawar, 1973).

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hypotheses regarding the existence of *mirāsīs* and *uparīs*—that the *uparīs* were introduced as the old proprietors sank under the tyranny of the Muslims, that the Muslims introduced *mirās* tenures in order to bind down the peasants, and that it was due to the natural growth of population.<sup>1</sup>

It would, therefore, be hazardous to make broad generalizations regarding Indian village society in the present state of our knowledge. As we have seen, the khud-kāsht and the  $p\bar{a}h\bar{i}s$  were not mutually exclusive. Also, India was a vast country with varying conditions. We cannot, therefore, preclude a situation in which feudal relations might become stronger in one region, while in another region forces for its transformation might be gathering strength. A careful search for and study of regional documents is, therefore, a prime requisite for a more realistic understanding of the stage of the development of Indian society during the 18th century.<sup>2</sup>

APPENDIX I Yāddāshtī hal Bail Pargana Pidayan V.S. 1783/A.D. 1726

Name of the Mauza	No. of Gaveti Cultivators	No. of Pahi Gultivators	Total Cultivators	No. of I	Ploughs Pahi	Total Ploughs	No. of Gaveti	Bullocks Pahi	Total Bullocks	Total Cultivable area in Bighas (Qabil Ziraat)	Area under Cultivation in Bighas (Ziraat)
Qsba Pirayan Rasul Pur Melghara Jodhpur Sehro Ichhori Mukand Pur Sahiba Bad Talo Kuwaho Bhuri Pahari Tove Kalan Kherlo Salam Pur Dharo Gurio Ram Singh Pur Jai Singh Pur Tove Khurd	92 16 30 5 20 17 5 4 16 14 4 16 2 2 15 27 8 6 4 8 7	22 1 10 1 6 10 1 	144 17 40 6 26 27 6 4 23 14 6 18 4 16 31 12 8 4	113 17 31 4 20 18 5 4 23 14 4 16½ 2 15 28 8 6 4	22 1 10 2 6 11 1 — 9 — 2 2 2 2 1 4 2 4 2	135 18 41 6 26 29 6 4 32 14 6 18½ 4 16 32½ 12 8 4 8	226 34 62 8 40 36 10 8 46 28 8 32 4 30 56 16 12 8 16	44 2 20 4 12 22 2 — 18 — 4 4 4 4 4 - 2 8 8	270 36 82 12 52 58 12 8 64 28 12 36 8 32 64 24 16 8	5756 910 1400 270 1100 1100 610 270 820 — 410 1000 800 500 1100 700 575 250 — 650	3276 509 1021 107 612 849 275 201 770 — 223 475 316 414 863 255 300 200 — 500
TOTAL	318	75	393	3471	791	427	694	158	852	18,221	11,1661

[ Prepared by Mr Dilbagh Singh, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. ]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Elphinstone, Official Writings, pp. 279, 392, 401-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> [I am grateful to Mr Dilbagh Singh, Jawaharlal Nehru University, for calling my attention to and providing references to the Rajasthani Records, to Mr Hasan Mahmud, Indian Council of Historical Research, for providing references to Khwaja Yasin's Glossary and to Professor Yogendra Singh, Centre for Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, for calling my attention to the recent sociological works regarding the Indian village society.]

Some Aspects of Indian Village Society in Northern India during the 18th Century

(Contd.)

# Statement showing the different Tenures of Land in the Koombharee Division of the Patoda Talooka.

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OOMILIO	NAME OF VILLAGE	Kusba Koombharee Dharungaon Kopergaon Sowntsura Rahate Puntambee	Mowjec Kurunjec Budrookh Kokumathan Sude Singwee Warree	" Daooch	" Daooch Budrookh " Gharce " Moissutpoor " Moissutpoor " Mahegaon " Kolegaon " Kolegaon " Kahazapoor " Manjoor " Tamus Warree	Khurunjee Khoord Khoord Khoord Khedele Morwees Mundgaon Mundgaon Sangwee Mukhtarpoor Mukhtarpoor Jeoor	Тотаг

# TRIBALISM TO FEUDALISM IN ASSAM: 1600-1750

### Amalendu Guha

I

### Early State Formation

The Assamese society,\* though a segment of the Indian society at large, exhibited in course of its evolution several distinctive features not shared by the latter. The multi-caste village community, based on jajmānī relations, was unknown to Assam. There was no urbanization at all. The number of specialized castes remained extremely limited and the division of labour minimal. Weaving of cloth for exchange was generally carried on in all households by women irrespective of their caste status. The revenue system was based on a corvée payable to the state. Besides, the use of slaves and serfs in agriculture was of more than marginal importance. All these distinctive features indicate the continued, inhibiting influence of tribalism on the evolution of the medieval Assamese society.

Several tribal state formations<sup>1</sup> alongside a fragmented political system known as the bhuiyan-rāj flourished during the 13th-16th centuries. The term bhuiyan or bhomik is etymologically derived from bhumiyo or bhūmi meaning land and signified a land-owner or land-controller. A caste-differentiated Assamese-speaking people under the Bhuiyans formed the core of society and coexisted with numerous tribal settlements representing diverse languages and uneven levels of cultural development.

The Bhuiyans often grouped themselves together locality-wise either under the hegemony of an overlord (bar-rājā) or formed a confederacy (bar-bhuiyan) headed by a chief (shiromani) Bhuiyan. Petty kings craved for the title of "Kāmeshvara" (Lord of Kāmarūpa) and still more for the title of "pancha-Gaudeshvara" (lord of the five Gaudas). When such

<sup>\*</sup> The geographical coverage of this society comprises all the 10 districts of the present state of Assam (78,842 sq. kms.) as well as Goalpara, Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills and Cachar. This was precisely the area covered by the Koch-Hajo, the Ahom and the Kachari kingdoms in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. From 1526 onwards the Kachari kingdom was claimed to be a vassal state "established and protected" (thāpita-sanchita) by the Ahoms and was invaded from time to time whenever the latter asserted independence. Koch-Hajo, annexed by the Mughals around 1612, frequently changed hands during the period of intermittent Mughal-Ahom conflicts for 68 years, from 1614 to 1682. In the latter year, except for Goalpara district, the whole of Koch-Hajo finally came under the Ahoms. The British became masters of Goalpara in 1765 and of the rest of Assam after 1824.

The population of Assam, as defined above, was three millions or so in the first half of the 18th century, but gradually came down to some 1.1 millions in the critical decade of 1821-30 according to our estimates. It was only 2.1 millions at the census of 1872.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The earliest of these, the Chutiya kingdom in the north-east corner of Assam, was absorbed by the Ahom state in 1523. The Koch state founded around 1515 was bifurcated into two states, Koch Bihar in north Bengal and Koch-Hajo in Assam, in 1581. The latter was absorbed by the Ahom state in the 17th century. Only the Kachari state, reduced to vassalage, continued to exist separately. All these states had expanded in their formative stage through the suppression of the Bhuiyans.

a claimant was strong enough, the neighbouring Bhuiyans recognized him as their liegelord and paid personal homage at his court. Otherwise, they remained independent. Most of the Bhuiyans were Kayastha by caste; others belonged to the brahmin, Daivajna and Kalita (a dominant peasant caste) castes. Some were of local royal descent; others, particularly the Kayasthas, were often migrant-adventurers from north India. Various surnames used by them such as bhuiyan, giri, ray, dalai (dalapati) and khan suggest that they were a class of estate-holders at the village level. They based their claims on erstwhile royal grants of land along with serfs and/or on their own armed prowess which was needed to protect the villages from frequent tribal incursions.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Bhuiyans, big and small, appear to have constituted a squirearchy which wielded hereditary political and economic power at the intermediate and grass-root levels. Apparently the hierarchy of the power-structure was at times vertically quite deep in the following order:

pancha-gaudeshvara (Lord of five Gaudas)
kāmeshvara (Lord of Kāmrūpa)
bar-rājā or chhotā-rājā
bar-bhuiyan or shiromani bhuiyan (mahāgrāmeshvara)
saru (minor) bhuiyan or grāmeshvara (lord of the village)
pāik (free peasantry) and bandi-beti/bahatiyā (slaves/serfs)

Even after their suppression by the expanding Koch and Ahom states the Bhuiyans did not lose their local influence completely and were absorbed into the lower echelons of the new machinery set up for corvée collection (in the capacity of kakati, gomostha,thakuria, bara and barua), for they constituted the traditional élite having a formal education in arithmetic, the use of arms and scriptures (ankat, shāstrat, shāstrat pārgat). The syllabus of this formal education generally included lessons on vyākarana, bhārata, purāna, bhāgavata, nyāya, tarka and kāyasthika or kaitheli vidyā (i.e., arithmetic and mensuration). Shankardev (1449-1568) and Madhadev (1489-1526), both Vaishnava preceptors of Kayastha and Bhuiyan descent, had this kind of education. So had Shankardev's son.<sup>2</sup>

The Bhuiyans in their heyday were mostly followers of the Shakti cult. Together with Shaivism and secretly practised tantric-Buddhist magic cults, it dominated the Assamese religious sphere.<sup>3</sup> The heterogeneous local tribal deities, mother-goddess cults and fertility rites were absorbed in the growing Hindu pantheon. The fragmented semi-tribal political system and embryonic feudal relations within a tribe were projected in the religious thought

This account is based on details in E. A. Gait, History of Assam, 3rd revised edn (Calcutta, 1967), pp. 39-46; M. Neog, Shrishri Shankardev (in Assamese, 3rd edn, Gauhati, 1958), pp. 10-6, 35-6, 55-6, 78-83, 91; Harakanta Barua, Assam Buranji (in Assamese, S. K. Bhuyan ed, 2nd edn, Gauhati, 1962), p. 24. Also see my working paper "Feudalism in Early Medieval India: Some Comments" in the unpublished Proceedings of the Seminar on Problems of Social and Economic History (Advanced Centre of Medieval History, Aligarh Muslim University), 16-20 December 1968.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Neog, op. cit., pp. 37-8, 87, 120. A variation of the course, as in the case of Shankardev, might have included the *Rāmāyana*, *kāvya*, *shruti* and *smriti* as well. Available dates of death for the Vaishnava preceptors of Assam are reliable, but the same cannot be said of their dates of birth.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> M. Neog, Purani Ashamiyā Samāj āru Sanskriti (in Assamese, Dibrugarh, 1957), pp. 19-31.

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of Assam. Thus the cult of the Ahoms, the Tai peasant community which had migrated into Assam in the 13th century, integrated existing lord-vassal relations among them with heaven and earth, spirits and ancestors.<sup>1</sup>

The rudimentary Ahom state had at its base many agricultural village (ban) settlements, each made up of a certain number of big or small families belonging to different family-groups (foid). Each such settlement had a well-defined territory including wet ricefields, waste lands, forest tracts and house sites. Several such settlements together formed an intermediate administrative unit or domain with one of the village settlements as the headquarters (che) of the noblemen governing it. At the apex of the several domains was the king who appointed the nobles to their respective offices and could dismiss them when necessary. The king could himself be removed by the Council of great nobles. The decentralized nature of the early Ahom state apparatus was reflected in the Tai term for political rule: kin mung kin ban mung, i.e., "to eat country, to eat village". By the term was meant either the kingdom as a whole or any of its constituent chiefs' domains. It originally signified a chief's village/town governing the surrounding territory. At the ban level all wet rice-lands were communal property, but were separately cultivated by family units. The holders of wet rice-lands had to render service to the community, which in practice meant to its nobles holding office at the state and village levels for purposes of defence and public works. During the 13th-15th centuries there was a complete absence of minted money and the extent of trade was negligible. Thus the state organization had a peculiar quasi-feudalistic structure. Neo-Vaishnavism with its emphasis on a monistic world view, pacifism and equality of all before God could not easily penetrate such a fragmented society until a basis was created for its further consolidation.

### II

# Growth of the Ahom State and Its Feudalization

If the 16th century, dominated by the expanding Koch kingdom, was a formative period for the Assamese society, the next one century and a half was the period of its steady consolidation under the Ahoms. The extension of plough at the cost of hoe cultivation and of wet at the expense of dry rice-lands alongside a general agricultural expansion—a process that was going on for some time in Upper Assam—led to a rapid increase in the surplus produced. The consequent rise in population provided the Ahoms with the material base for their further economic and political expansion. Fire-arms, introduced first in the 1530s, were increasingly put to use and, by the 1660s, excellent gunpowder, matchlocks and cannon were manufactured locally. Coins were for the first time struck by the Ahom, Koch and Kachari kings during the years 1543-1600, though on an extremely modest scale. Thus

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the Tai religion see Dang Nghien Van, "An Outline of the Thai in Vietnam", Vietnam Studies, viii, no 32 (1972), 188-93; P. R. T. Gurdon, "A Short Note on the Ahoms" in J. Hastings, ed, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, i (1908), 235-6; G. C. Barua, ed. and tr., Ahom Buranji (Calcutta, 1930), pp. 1-23.

the earliest Ahom coins bear a date equivalent to A.D. 1543, but more than a century passed before another batch of them were struck. The continued use of cowries and Mughal coins was supplemented from the mid-17th century onwards by frequent local minting This indicated a slow growth of the market in Upper Assam. In 1662 there was only one narrow bazar road in the Ahom capital and the only traders in that bazar were the betel-leaf sellers. "It was not the practice", reported Shihabuddin Talish, "to buy and sell food in the market-place. The inhabitants store in their houses one year's supply of food of all kinds and are under no necessity to buy or sell any eatable". However, by 1739 we find prices of various foodstuff being quoted in a copperplate grant. This suggests a change in the situation, which is corroborated by the fact that the Ahom mint was constantly at work and silver coins of smaller denomination were being increasingly issued from the close of the 17th century.2

During the 17th century some new crops such as tobacco and pineapples<sup>3</sup> and new crafts such as brass metal casting were introduced. To meet the needs of the expanding population salt and saltpetre had to be increasingly imported from Mughal India mainly against the export of forest products, mustard-seeds, inferior gold extracted from sandwashing and muga silk. Surplus rice, dried fish and handloom manufactures of the plains were received in exchange for raw cotton, lump iron, rock-salt and forest products from the surrounding hills. Traders of Lower Assam carried on trade by river within and beyond Assam on a modest scale during the 16th-17th centuries.

The basic structure of the Ahom state was undergoing slow changes towards a centralization of the corvée and political authority. The man-power available for rendering service was of two broad categories: (i) chamuā pāik, i.e., those liable to render non-manual service or allowed to contribute a share of their produce in lieu thereof and (ii) kānri pāik, i.e., those liable to render manual service as ordinary soldiers and labourers. Both categories were grouped in manageable divisions (dagi) village-wise and/or function-wise according to convenience. The pāiks came in rotation for active service in their respective units.4 Three or four of them, all presumably belonging to an extended family or a common neighbourhood, were expected to complete between them a man-year of unpaid service. This is evident from the fact that, a man-power census was taken in 1510 and that the royal demand for corvée during Suklenmung's reign (1539-52) was set at "one man for every four (e-poā) per household". However, the system had its loose ends. "Some Ahoms

<sup>2</sup> Gait, op. cit., p. 222 fn. There was a total absence of copper currency in Assam.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 146; cf. S. K. Bhuyan, ed, *Deodhai Assam Buranji with Several Shorter Chronicles of Assam* (in Assamese, 2nd edn, Gauhati, 1962), p. 110.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Talish cited by Gait, op. cit., p. 153.

We find a similar system in medieval Siam (1350-1767). After the administrative reorganization in 1454 the whole population there was divided into civil and military groups. Each division called lakh was placed under a noble official and military groups. Each division called lakh was placed under a noble official and was sub-divided into two groups. (i) svay of those exempted from personal service upon payment of tax and (ii) prai or those called up in rotation to serve as soldiers and labourers. In a start of the called up in rotation to serve as soldiers and labourers. In a start of the called up in rotation to serve as soldiers and labourers. to serve as soldiers and labourers. In return for his personal services to his government a Thai free man cherished his ancient sight to the services to his government a Thai free man cherished his ancient sight to the services to his government a Thai free man cherished his ancient sight to the services to his government a Thai free man cherished his ancient sight to the service and the services to his government a Thai free man cherished his ancient sight to the service as soldiers and labourers. man cherished his ancient right to as much land as he and his family could cultivate, Virginia Thompson, Thailand the New Siam (New York, 1941), pp. 292-3, 313, 541, 675. Cf. D. A. Graham, i (London, 1994) 235.6 Siam, i (London, 1924), 235-6.

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recinia am, complied with, some did not. Only the conquered subjects", a chronicler commented, "perform whatever work is given to them". Obviously the rudimentary state as an organ of coercion vis-à-vis the dominant tribe was underdeveloped in the 16th century.

The militia or the man-power pool was made up of all adult males, Ahoms as well as non-Ahoms, in the 15-60 age-group with the exception of the nobility, priests, slaves and attached serfs. The tribal hoe-cultivators of frontier tracts were also generally excluded. The militia constituted the army in times of war. In times of peace it was engaged in various public works such as dam-building, land-reclamation and water control; it was customarily made available to the royal family and the office-holding nobility for private work on their big farms. Those kānri pāiks whose unpaid service was thus allotted to the office-holders—the latter received no salaries—were called likchou (personal retainers).

Every household customarily possessed three types of land: (i) a homestead plot surrounded by a garden and bamboo groves, held as private property; (ii) dry crop lands reclaimed at private initiative, also held as private property and (iii) a portion of the communally-held wet rice-lands, subject to redistribution from time to time. Besides, common lands such as forests and marshes within the  $b\bar{a}n$  were jointly shared. The possession of the third category of land alone was linked to the  $p\bar{a}ik$  service to the community. Evidently wet rice-lands were distributed after providing for the private démesnes of the chiefs, as was the medieval Tai practice in Vietnam.<sup>2</sup> The distribution of this residue was egalitarian in the sense that the same amount of wet rice-lands was given to each adult male, i.e.,  $p\bar{a}ik$ , as is evident from later practice on record.

The militia attached to the king, members of his family and other chiefs continued to be loosely organized till about the end of the 16th century. An individual derived his right to land not from the king representing the superimposed state, but presumably from his immediate village community  $(b\bar{a}n)$  headed by a chief. His service obligation to the state, therefore, was a transferred obligation which he originally owed to his  $b\bar{a}n$ . As such, the  $b\bar{a}n$  still acted as some sort of a restraint on the centralized authority. This is evident from a couple of recorded cases. In the mid-16th century an Ahom householder was able to resist successfully royal encroachment on his land even for such a purpose as the founding of a capital city.<sup>3</sup> About a hundred years thereafter king Pratap Singh (1603-41), who had a few paternal fields in village Revati, had to conciliate the Ahom villagers with a feast and gifts of clothes to get additional lands for further extension of his farm there.<sup>4</sup>

It was the sudden political expansion of the Ahoms into the relatively more advanced

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gait, op. cit., p. 87; cf. S. K. Bhuyan, ed, Satsari Assam Buranji (in Assamese, 3rd edn, Gauhati University, 1969), p. 21. Quoted from the latter (translation ours).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See D. N. Van, op. cit., pp. 171, 175.

<sup>3</sup> Satsari Assam Buranji, p. 20.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;David Scott's historical notes about Assam" in Col. White's Historical Miscellany, ii (Transcript); xvi, no. 24 (Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati). Scott's notes are based on chronicles he consulted and compared in manuscript. The fields belonged to king Sukampha (1552-1603). Pratap Singh extended and consolidated them to found a big farm known as jaykhamdang. Also see Assam Buranji, pp. 39-40. The establishment of the farm in Revati village is referred to here, but not the incident.

areas of Koch-Hajo as well as a demographic expansion that hastened certain significant reforms during the first half of the 17th century to strengthen the state apparatus. A fresh man-power census was undertaken, several new administrative-military offices were created and the militia was reorganized into well-knit divisions of six thousand persons each, now called *khels*. Many functional *khels* were also created. These were sub-divided into units of thousand, hundred and 20. The *khel* system was a remodelling of what existed rather than an innovation. The registered  $p\bar{a}ik$ 's customary right to hold a piece of wet rice-land was now strictly limited to a prescribed norm of 2.66 acres per  $p\bar{a}ik$ . His obligatory state service was fixed at three or four months in rotation. He could enjoy his allotment  $(g\bar{a}-m\bar{a}ti/body-land)$  as before, free of any other taxes. But for wet lands over and above this norm he had to pay now a tax probably in kind  $(p\bar{a}lpas\bar{a})$ . To measure land for this purpose a standard measuring rod was introduced for the first time. Thorough land surveys, as in Mughal India, were undertaken in the 1680s and were completed for the whole state by 1751. A number of skilled surveyors from Bengal migrated to Assam and settled in service there during these years.

The khel-wise organization of the people coexisted with the parallel village organization. Thus around 1830 Darrang had 147 villages organized into 39 khels and Nadur had 123 villages organized into 45 khels.2 Villages in Assam, however, were not nucleated; they were generally hamlet-type linear settlements along river banks. The imposition of a limit to a pāik's tax-free holding of wet rice-lands suggests that the old villages were already facing the problem of scarcity of land owing to overcrowding and that the state was facing a growing need of resources in forms other than labour-rent. This is also indicated by the introduction of a small toll (kātal) on fisheries, muga silk farms, markets and fairs, ferries and frontier customs barriers (phat) early in the 17th century.3 The surplus population, once identified, was redistributed in a planned manner. Individuals were separated from their respective households in old villages and settled in colonies in desolate areas. This helped to break up the clans and broaden the social and territorial base of the Ahom state. Attempts were made on the model of multi-caste villages in Mughal India to settle in every new village at least two households each from as many as 14 castes or so. Some of these castes were functional, for example, the Muslim braziers (maria). 4 The village pattern surviving in Upper Assam until the early years of British rule suggests that these attempts were infructuous or received a setback by the Burmese practice of carrying off artisans in particular as slaves during the short period of their occupation (1817-25).

The gradation of militia officers in terms of hundred and thousand was influenced according to some scholars by the Mughal system. The Assamese term khel for a division

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Satsari Assam Buranji, pp. 26-7, 76-7, 136; A Guha, "Ahom Migration: Its Impact on Rice Economy of Medieval Assam", Artha Vijnana, ix, no. 2 (June 1967), 151-2; Assam Buranji, pp. 56, 63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Col. White's Historical Miscellany, i, 12, 206.

<sup>3</sup> Satsari Assam Buranji, pp. 29, 138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 26, 77; Deodhai Assam Buranji, pp. 70, 130. The latter source refers to the drive for colonization and setting up of new villages even during the years following 1648. Ahom Buranji, p. iii; Assam Buranji, pp. 44, 57, 63.

(or a clan in a different context) is obviously derived from the Arabic-Persian term *kheil*, meaning a cavalry division or a tribal clan. However, the centurion system appears to have had its roots in the traditional Tai military organization, as similar principles of organization prevailed in medieval Thailand as well. The aforesaid reforms were an attempt on the part of the Ahom monarchy to strengthen itself by transforming the nobility (feudality) into a military-administrative service whose personal bond with the  $p\bar{a}iks$  had been disrupted. By putting the  $p\bar{a}ik$  in an extra-territorial *khel* and providing for inter-*khel* transfers the king could now abridge his nobles' power over a cohesive geographical unit like the  $b\bar{a}n$  and the bond between the king and the  $p\bar{a}iks$  could be correspondingly strengthened.

Simultaneously the Mughal part of Koch-Hajo was divided after 1637 into a number of parganas and subjected to a land-tax preferably payable in cash, as in the rest of Mughal India. This was retained later under the Ahoms with only slight modifications. The land allotment per  $p\bar{a}ik$  was slightly higher, and the assessed pecuniary tax was generally retained in lieu of personal service.

The society that was being integrated by the twin processes of (i) the neo-Vaishnavite movement from below and (ii) the political unification from above continued to be feudal in its essence, both in its political and manorial aspects. The element of political feudality was only marginally undermined by the aforesaid reforms, which were more anti-tribal than anti-feudal in their nature. In fact, during the same period half a dozen or so of border tribal states with hereditary rājās besides Darrang and Kachari kingdoms were stabilized as vassals (thāpita-sanchita) vis-à-vis the Ahom states, their patron. As to the manorial aspect, the priests of temples together with the nobles including the king constituted the dominant class. They had their tax-free private agricultural farms (comparable to lord's démesne) which were cultivated by their own slaves and attached serfs settled thereupon. These slaves and attached serfs were not numerous and together accounted for hardly 10 per cent.—perhaps much less—of the total population. Another estimated 25 to 30 per cent. of the entire kānri pāik labour force (i.e., of the free peasantry) was allotted as likchou (personal attendants) by the state to the office-holding nobles. These too were a special category of collectivized quasi-serfs enjoined to work on the big private farms. They directly worked

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Virginia Thompson, op. cit.

In 1826 likehous constituted 29 per cent. of the registered pāiks in Muttak (1,800 sq. miles) and 24 per cent. in Sadiyakhowa territory, both offshoots of the Ahom state. This is worked out from the two relevant documents, nos. Ixvi and cxviii, in C. U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sunnads Relating to India's Neighbouring Countries, i (Calcutta, 1876), 203, 300. During the early years of British rule, from 1825-6 to 1830-1, the dues of the officers in charge of khels in Assam were put at 27 per cent. of the total revenue demand each year. This provides a basis for our estimate, Neufville to D. Scott, Foreign Political 10 June 1831, nos. 51-6 (National Archives of India). J.P. Wade at the close of the 18th century found that everyone in the official hierarchy was entitled to the corvée of two out of every 20 pāiks in his jurisdiction. This was perhaps the maximum limit, see B. Sharma, ed, J. P. Wade's Account of Assam (compiled in 1792-1800, Sibsagar, 1927), pp. xv-xvi. According to as his likehous, Haliram Dhekial Phukkan, Assam Buranji (in Bengali, 1829; J. Bhattacharya, ed, "Land Rights and Social Classes in Medieval Assam", IESHR, iii, no. 3 (1966), 233-4.

for the parasitic class to provide them with a surplus and together with slaves and attached serfs formed about one-third of the population. Apparently the *likchous* were treated worse than the slaves, for whereas the master had to feed the slaves and was materially affected if the latter died or ran away, the self-maintained *likchou* involved no such investment by the master and was only temporarily assigned to him during the tenure of his office. The *likchou* was, therefore, liable to unbridled exploitation subject to only customary checks.

We propose to examine the extent to which the neo-Vaishnavite movement accorded with this type of class society which successfully maintained its integrity and stability until the mid-18th century and the social changes brought about by their mutual interaction.

III

### Hinduization and Detribalization

The earlier state formations depended on kinship and feudal ties, but with the rising authority of the monarch there began a search for a universal religion to teach the people to be obedient, patient and submissive. The Koch monarchy initiated the process which was continued by the 17th-century Ahom kings and still later by the Kachari kings. Pratap Singh found it prudent to patronize Shaivism without relinquishing his Tai-Ahom faith. He also revived the old practice of making brahmottara, devottara and dharmottara land grants to brahmins and temples. For the first time he engaged learned brahmins in place of the Ahoms for diplomatic missions abroad on the ground that the former were more shrewd. However, all these changes only indicated the groping for a proper religious policy to find stable allies from amongst the non-Ahoms. During Pratap Singh's reign the mahāpurushiā sect of neo-Vaishnavism was subjected to much persecution and several of their gosāins or high priests, among them Mukunda Gosain, were put to death. This kind of royal oppression of neo-Vaishnavite groups took place from time to time for a century longer.

For the greater part of the hundred years ending 1750, excepting the last half of Gadadhar Singh's reign (1681-96), the Ahom kings generally showed due respect and courtesy to the neo-Vaishnavite gosāins and made grants and endowments for the maintenance of their monasteries. Several important satras were also set up under their patronage. Having lost much of its earlier idealism, the neo-Vaishnavite movement had already split into a number of distinct sects. For all of them sharan had become a stereotyped ceremony symbolizing the bhakat's (devotee's) total submission to his guru (teacher). The bhakat had to seek spiritual protection of the guru by prostrating himself before the latter. Clearly the feudal model of a personal bond between a patron and his client had affected the principles of the satra organization. Irrespective of sects, all the tithe-collecting satras also invariably hankered after power and grants of estates and serfs.

<sup>1</sup> Gait, op. cit., p. 123; Satsari Assam Buranji, p. 75; Assam Buranji, pp. 63-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Gait, op. cit., pp. 289-90.

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They could, however, be placed under two broad categories which we shall for convenience call the left and right wings. Issues such as idol-worship, observance of brahminical rites, celebacy as a necessary condition for monkhood and especially the propriety of the initiation of a brahmin by a shudra divided them.

Left-wing satras had generally shudra gosāins. Like the founders of the movement, they invariably believed that there was nothing wrong in a brahmin being spiritually initiated by a shudra. Naturally, they gained a strong foothold amongst the despised castes as well as the tribal neophytes. Consistently opposed to the left-wing trends, the Ahom court pursued over the years a "divide and rule" policy, discouraging the nonconformist and encouraging the conformist satras. Most brutal persecution was carried on during the last five years of Gadadhar's reign. However, after his death the policy was reversed by his son, Rudra Singh. A conference of Vaishnava gosains of all sects was convened by him in his capital in 1702 for a debate on the controversial religious issues. The outcome of this conference was a royal decree forbidding shudras from initiating the brahmins. Exemplary punishments followed any violation of the ban. The head of a certain satra was punished even for discarding idol-worship. At the same time official patronage was extended to all conformist satras headed by the brahmins. Selected gosāins were given the privilege of blessing the Ahom kings at their coronation and as many as 1,230 big and small satras received recognition from the state. All this happened during the reign of Rudra Singh (1696-1714), not himself a Vaishnava by faith.1

After a long period of hesitation Rudra Singh finally decided in 1714 to throw his weight in favour of the Shakti cult as the most suitable faith for a reigning king and the ruling class. A stable alliance had meanwhile been forged between the monarchy and the right-wing of neo-Vaishnavites. Thus from the beginning of the 18th century—more than six decades after the first adoption of Hinduism by one of them—the Ahom kings became staunch Hindus. Instead of burying their dead, they now began to cremate them in Hindu fashion. Pile-houses on raised platforms began to give way to mud-plinth houses. The Ahom language was almost completely replaced by Assamese at the court. The grant of land and serfs to brahmins, Hindu temples and even neo-Vaishnavite satras increasingly became an extensive practice.

Two factors account for the earlier policy of all-out persecution during the few years immediately preceding Rudra Singh's reign. The satras had grown very rich and therefore the confiscation of their wealth including gold idols was held to be justified. Secondly, the country had become full of gosāins and bhakats who naturally claimed the traditional priestly privilege of exemption from the kānri pāik and likchou services, thus seriously inconveniencing the state. Indeed, this second factor might have been the main motivation behind the neo-Vaishnavite upsurge and hence provoked its persecution. The satras had become the refuge of those who wanted to escape the corvée. Gadadhar's selective and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. K. Bhuyan, ed, Tungkhungia Buranji (in Assamese, 2nd edn, Gauhati, 1964), pp. 30-1; Gait, op.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Gait, op. cit., pp. 173-4, 288. Satsari Assam Buranji, pp. 117-8, 149; Tungkhungia Buranji, pp. 14, 26-7.

discriminating persecution during the years 1690-6 aimed at removing married, but not the celibate, bhakats (monks) from the satras. Bhakats belonging to the four highest castes—brahmin, Daivajna, Kayastha and Kalita—were left unmolested, but those of the intermediate and low castes were hunted down, expropriated and made to interdine and eat forbidden food. Many of the gosāins were tortured, even killed; as for example, Baikunthanathdev (d. 1691) of the Maomaria (Mayamara) satra. The followers of neo-Vaishnavism were forced to work for the construction of a 117-mile road which was named dhodar ali—"the road of the lazy".

However, despite such a savagely cruel persecution the satras could not be isolated from the people. As they could not be crushed, they had to be tamed. The persecution was stopped even before Gadadhar's death and a new policy cleverly formulated by his successor, Rudra Singh. Those gosāins who were brahmins were restored to their respective satras in full honour. Even the shudra gosāins were allowed to go back to their vocations, but were now forced to wear a distinctive badge and abandon their brahmin bhakats. It was with this humiliation that Chaturbhujdev was installed as the head (1696-1748) of the Moamaria satra.

This "divide and rule" policy succeeded in rallying the forces of brahminism and right-wing neo-Vaishnavism on the side of the Ahom court as against the left-wing satras. The latter sought refuge in remote tribal areas and amongst the lower castes as well as the poorer sections of the people. They continued to preach, often secretly, according to their faith and in another half century there appeared popular uprisings under a religious garb almost all over Assam. These developed into a prolonged civil war (1770-1810) in which the left-wing Maomaria satra played the most significant role.<sup>1</sup>

IV

Conclusion

A process of Sanskritization and detribalization was going on during the century and a half under review. But as fresh batches of tribal peoples from the hills were continuously settling down in the valleys of Assam, the process was halting and never complete. Yet within the given situation of the hills-plains continuum the early semi-tribal semi-feudal state formations progressively acquired marked anti-tribal features.

The ruling tribal families adopted Hinduism, but unlike in mid-India did not attain or aspire for the kshatriya or Rajput status despite validation through flattering and miraculous myths about their origin. This had an important implication. No caste cleavage was driven between the commoners and their ruling hierarchy within the same tribe (this observation does not apply to certain Ahom clans of low origin who remained degraded). In

A detailed discussion of this event is beyond the chronological limit of this paper. Tungkhungia Buranji is an important primary source in this respect. In Assam, excluding Cachar and North Cachar Hills, 64 per cent. of the Hindu population followed Vaishnavism, 15 per cent. Shaktism and less than two per cent. Shaivism in 1901, Census Report, Assam, 1901, p. 42.

spite of their prolonged political rule, the Ahom, Kachari and Koch tribes, on being admitted into the Hindu society as new castes, were given a status much inferior to that of the four high castes including the dominant peasant caste, Kalita. Though considerably Ahomized through inter-marriages, the Chutiya tribe was also able to preserve its separate identity as a new Hindu caste of low status.

Koch was an omnibus caste which accommodated within itself tribal neophytes from different Tibeto-Burmese linguistic groups. A converted tribal of this group in Assam first became a Sarania and then developed into a Koch. However, all Kochs of Goalpara, like those of north Bengal, who claimed descent from the original ruling tribe that had first adopted Hindusim, preferred to call themselves Rajbansi in due course rather than Koch. They describe themselves as Rajbansi-Kshatriyas even now.

The Kalita caste tended to divide itself into several functional sub-castes—bar-kalita (agriculturist), kumār-kalita (potter), māli-kalita (gardener), kamār-kalita (blacksmith), nāo-talia (boat-maker), tānti (weaver), etc.,² but no fission actually took place. The possible role of neo-Vaishnavism as a deterrent in this matter might be profitably investigated. Apparently the Daivajna caste during this period continuously improved its status under royal patronage and almost equalled the brahmins in prestige. This was because of the importance given to astrology practised by them and had no parallel elsewhere in India.

Muslim prisoners of wars and adventurers settled down in Assam in appreciable numbers during the period under review. They were, according to Talish (1662), "inclined more towards mingling with the Assamese than towards association with Muslims". Aurangzeb granted revenue-free land in 1667 to Hindu temple priests in Koch-Hajo, while an Assamese king made a similar grant to a Muslim faqir later on. The influence of Mughal India is seen in the introduction of such crafts as tailoring, brass metal casting and manufacture of perfume from roses. The initial resistance to the use of the Mughal-type sewn dress at the Ahom court was overcome by the end of the 17th century and the Assamese court dress closely followed the Mughal model. Two important functional khels of the Parsi-Parhias (Persian translators) and the Khanikars (artisans) were constituted of Muslims. Incidentally, the caste of Muslim braziers that emerged during this period was despised because of its occupation of liquor-brewing.

We also do not come across a developed trading and banker class as such. The contradiction between the estate-owning aristocracy and the free peasants (pāiks) with small holdings, who had to periodically suffer a quasi-serf (likchou) status ultimately found expression in a religious conflict. But there was much more to the struggle between the satras and the monarchy than this; it reflected the conflicts within the ruling class itself,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a discussion by E. P. Stack of this process in the 19th century see Census Report, Assam, 1881, chapter VI, pp. 66, 74. Dhekial Phukkan, op. cit., p. 88. According to Capt. John Butler, the Mikirs also on their conversion entered the Koch caste, Travels and Adventures in the Province of Assam (London, 1854) p. 137.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Census Report, Assam, 1901, p. 133. Dhekial Phukkan, op. cit., pp. 87-8. <sup>3</sup> Gait, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> S. K. Bhuyan, ed, Annals of the Delhi Badshahate (Gauhati, 1947), pp. 15-8, 233. Lakshmi Singh's Copperplate grant of A. D. 1780 and Aurangzeb's two Sanads of A. D. 1667.

the king, his nobles, temple priests, other privileged brahmins, erstwhile Bhuiyans and the newly-emerged satras, which called for a redistribution of the expanding economic surplus and political power. The method and agency for distributing increasing surplus and the fixation of relative shares of the religious and political functionaries were relevant and crucial issues in a period of all-round expansion.

The Ahom court did not make any land grants to the brahmins and their temples until the end of the 16th century, but this policy was reversed later and they received increasingly liberal grants of estates and serfs particularly in the 18th century. Among the beneficiaries were the newly-emerged satras. Economically such grants facilitated colonization and extension of agriculture to waste lands. Politically they created new bases of support for the centralized authority. Influential satras and petty tribal chiefs were absorbed into the ruling class. Thus the estate-holding class was deliberately expanded.

Any commensurate expansion of the class of farm slaves and serfs was, however, not possible. Its main source of supply being the prisoners of war and the state being entirely dependant on the militia for self-preservation, too many serfs out of the free population could not be afforded. In fact, free pāiks and their male children were not allowed to be sold into slavery. Hence the slave-and-serf base of agriculture remained extremely narrow despite abundance of land. The servile class on the whole was treated well, at least better than likehous. Having no obligation to fight, its members had a secure life as well. On the other hand the free peasantry faced increasing insecurity on account of frequent wars and ruthless exploitation by the official aristocracy which was allowed to exact unpaid likehou service from them. Those from low castes suffered most. It appears that debt-slavery was also developing as an institution.<sup>2</sup>

Hence the neo-Vaishnavite movement continued to have its appeal to the peasantry. It offered limited opportunities to them for an upward social mobility and imbued them with a sense of human dignity. Besides, by becoming *bhakats* they could vicariously challenge and even attempt to evade the obligation of manual service. These possibilities gave a militant turn to the movement in the second half of the 18th century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For jealousy expressed by the Ahom princes at the wealth and power of the satras see Tungkhungia Buranji, pp. 14, 26-7; Satsari Assam Buranji, pp. 117-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Needy peasants mortgaged their labour to well-to-do households against a loan. This system was quite prevalent in early 19th century and can be traced as far back as the early 17th century. The famous statesman, Momai Tamuli, was in the beginning of his career around 1603 a bonded labourer to his nephew, reportedly for a loan of four rupees only, see S. K. Bhuyan, Lachit Barphukan and His Times (Gauhati, 1947), p. 17.

# SOME ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS IN PANJABSIKH STATES

### R. P. Srivastava

Art never lies and mirrors in every age the cultural heritage of its people irrespective of the medium of expression they prefer to adopt. But this aspect of human civilization in the history of Panjab has not received adequate attention of the historians so far. The contributions of Dr W. G. Archer, 1 Mrs Mildred Archer 2 and Mr Mulk Raj Anand3 have no doubt been notable. But they have largely confined themselves to the work done at the Lahore court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839). There is a general aversion to call this style of painting Sikh painting, but as the patronage was extended exclusively by the Sikh chiefs, it would not be historical blasphemy to designate this as such. An attempt is being made here to describe the rise and development of the works of fine arts under the aegis of the Sikh chiess of Panjab, whether they belonged to the cis-Sutlej or the trans-Sutlej region. Both these regions have been taken in hand for a variety of reasons: the close relations of the Panjab chiefs among themselves, the geographical contiguity of the areas under their rule, the use of same artists at different places and the consequent migration or extension of styles from one place to another. Although the indigenous element was fairly strong and had its rightful place in the local style, some British, Austrian, Hungarian and Russian artists penetrated the native tradition with the result that the art of painting at Amritsar shows definite signs of infection by and assimilation of European styles of drawing and adoption of light and shade procedure in fuller detail.

The tradition of painting in the Panjab plains saw its heyday in the 19th century when the forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh defeated Maharaja Sansar Chand of Kangra (1775-1823), who accepted the former's suzerainty. Maharaja Sansar Chand and his successors were keen and enthusiastic patrons of art, poetry and literature. Ample evidence is available that the artists of his court fled to Lahore and Amritsar4 and some sought patronage in the courts of the princely states of Patiala,<sup>5</sup> Jind and Kapurthala. The artists who migrated from Kangra, Chamba, Basohli, Noorpur, Guler and Jammu carried with them their own Pahari style of painting wherever they went. portraits found in the Lahore, Amritsar, Patiala and Kapurthala collections. This is discernible in the

Lahore became the hub of hectic artistic activity and numerous artists worked in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Belonging to the Sukerchakia misl, he had become its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Paintings of the Sikhs (London, 1966).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Company Drawings in India Office Library (London, 1972).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Painting under the Sikhs", Marg, vii, no. 2 (March 1954) and "Specimens of Painting under the Sikhs", Marg, x, no. 2 (March, 1957).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Herman Goetz, Studies in History and Art of Kashmir and Indian Himalaya (Weisbaden, 1969), p. 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Mildred Archer, op. cit., p. 210.

overlord and consolidated his supremacy over all other misls1 through the length and breadth of Panjab, North-West Frontier Province, Kashmir and the hills by means of astute diplomacy and emergent military strategy based on European know-how. His admi. nistration was built upon the most cosmopolitan foundations and he based all his decisions and actions purely on merit. Religion did not influence or orient his policies. The artists at his court belonged to all communities, Sikh, Muslim and Hindu. Among them were Khear Singh,<sup>2</sup> Mohammed Bakhsh,<sup>3</sup> Purkhu, Devi Datta, Sher Mohammed, Ram Singh Amir Bakhsh<sup>4</sup> and Mohammed Azim. They did not serve their royal patron alone but were also satisfying the aesthetic needs of the small Sikh feudal aristrocracy, ministers, generals courtiers, langries, jugglers, 5 nihangs, 6 etc. All sorts of things were painted: individual portraits, court scenes, shikar scenes, festivals and funerals, and frescoes in the temples and gurdwaras at Lahore, Amritsar, Goindwal, Taran Tarn, Khadur Sahib, Baba Bakala Batala and other places. Manuscripts were also illustrated<sup>7</sup> on the Mughal pattern and janam sākhīs were prepared and decorated. Painting on small ivory pieces, mostly depicting the courtiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and other Sikh sardars, was a remarkable achieve ment of this period.

Art of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, deserves special mention here. Most of its golden treatment was done by the generous grants of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Internal frescon were done by the guilds of artisans of Chinoht (Jhang district, now in Pakistan) accompanied by the local artists, among them Kishan Singh, 10 Bishan Singh, Gian Singh, Maham Ishar Singh and Kapur Singh. Something may be said here about the social background and status of these artists. Most of the Sikh artists belonged to the Ramgarhia community of Amritsar and Lahore where their descendants 11 still live though they are engaged in

<sup>2</sup> Syeed Waheed-ud-Din, The Real Ranjit Singh (Karachi, 1965), p. 121.

4 W. G. Archer, India and Modern Art (London, 1959), p. 26.

Archives, Patiala).

Specimens of ivory paintings can be seen in the collection of India Office Library, London, and Panjab Government Archives, Patiala.

10 Giani Harinder Singh Roop, Sikh te Sikhi [in Panjabi] (Lahore, 1947), p. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Panjab was governed by 12 small Sikh clans or dynasties called misls.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> B. N. Goswamy, "Sikh Paintings: An Analysis of Some Aspects of Patronage", Oriental Art, xv, no. 1 (Richmond, Surrey, England, Spring 1969), 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> M. S. Randhawa, "Two 19th Century Punjab Artists", The Tribune, 27 July 1969 (Sunday Magazine Section), Ambala Cantt.

<sup>6</sup> These and other ethnological studies by artists Kehar Singh and Kapur Singh are available in Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh. We are grateful to the authorities of the museum for having shown us their reserve collection. <sup>7</sup> Pandit Raj Ram Tota, "Gulgashta-e-Panjab" (Persian MS) Lahore, n.d. folio 170 (Panjab State

in 1859 by Guru Sadhu Singh, India Office Library, Punjab MSS. E.2 and E. 1; The Sikh Courtier, v, no. 4 (London, Autumn 1969), p. 51.

Hakim Gurcharan Singh, Guru Ram Dass, Sarai Road, Amritsar, is a descendant of Kehar Singh G. S. Sohan Singh, son of the late Gian Singh, works as a photographer in shop No. 27, Braham Buta Akhara Market, near Guru Ram Dass, Sarai Road, Amritsar. Kapur Singh, son-in-law of artist Kapur Singh, works as a contractor and lives behind the National and Grindlay's Bank, Amritsar. Bank, Amritsar.

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professions other than that of their ancestors. These artists worked sometimes in groups and sometimes individually. The fresco painting at the Golden Temple is a marvellous example of the co-operative efforts of these artists. They were also successful builders who constructed magnificent houses for the business community at Amritsar and Lahore.

The most prominent place after Lahore and Amritsar where art and culture developed from the very beginning was Patiala. Its founding father, Baba Allah Singh, was a great soldier who built the state after migrating from Jaisalmer (Rajasthan) in the 18th century. He was in the good books of the Mughal government in Delhi and helped this in various military expeditions against the attacks of Durrani and Abdali. He was consequently rewarded with a jāgīr, the title of Maharaja and other favours. His successors built the outer walls of Qila Mubarik in the Rajasthani style, Dewan-e-Khas, Dewan-e-Aam, Old Moti Bagh Palace, Sheesh Mahal, Gurdwara Dukhniwaran Sahib, Gurdwara Shri Guru Teg Bahadur, temples of Kidar Nath, Badri Nath and Tung Nath, Shahi Samadhan (royal cemetery) and Mahendra College, all of which stand out as the best symbols of the aesthetic taste of the rulers of the erstwhile Patiala state. Art had a multi-faceted growth in Patiala leading to what may be termed as classic renaissance of the Phulkian region.1

Most of the architectural monuments in Patiala were built during the reigns of Maharaja Narinder Singh (1845-62) and his son Maharaja Mohinder Singh (1862-76), who were great and liberal patrons of fine arts. Maharaja Narinder Singh constructed the Old Moti Bagh Palace at a cost of five lakhs of rupees on the pattern of the Shalimar of Lahore. The objective, however, was only partly achieved as the architects, masons and artisans hailing from Rajasthan made this a piece of pure and excellent Rajasthani architecture. The gurdwara in front of it cost one and a half lakhs and the Dewan-e-Khas five lakhs.3 A Sheesh Mahal was constructed behind the Moti Bagh Palace in 1847.4 It possesses the world famous frescoes with a stylistic affiliation with the Pahari paintings of Guler and Kangra. These frescoes depict scenes from the Hindu patheon. Fresco painting and miniature painting developed in Patiala simultaneously,5 a fact which is most convincingly brought out by evidence in the National Archives of India.6 Every building bears a clear impress of Rajasthani Chhatri, Kiosk and tracery work which very well resembles the delicate and ornamental baroque romance of Rajasthani temple architecture7 in which red sandstone of Bharatpur and marble of the Rajasthan quarries were extensively used. The same material was used in Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Red Fort, Delhi.8

The princely states of Patiala, Kapurthala, Jind, Nabha and Faridkot constituted the "Phulkian states". They are said to have belonged to Chaudhry Phool's family. After their merger with the Union of India in 1948 they formed PEPSU which dissolved in the state of Panjab in 1956.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. Vadivelu, The Ruling Chiefs, Nobles and Zamindars of India, i (Madras, 1915), 113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Giani Gian Singh, Sikh Riasten [in Urdu] (Amritsar, n. d.), p. 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Khalifa Mohammed Hussain, T'arīkh-i-Patiala [in Urdu] (Amritsar, 1878), pp. 49, 464, 465, 788. <sup>5</sup> B. N. Goswamy, op. cit.

Letter no. 577, dated 27 May 1851—Foreign Deptt., 24-25 July 1851; letter no. 139, dated 18 February 1856—Foreign Deptt., Index no. 277, dated 14 March 1856 F. C.; letter no. 33, dated 1 June 1853—Foreign Deptt., Index no. 140, 30 December 1853, especially Schedule 'B'.

See H. Richam Ref. 77, 77, 100 C. Richam 1960, p. 1860, p. 1860,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See H. Bisham Pal, The Temples of Rajasthan (Alwar, 1969), plates 49, 60, 98, 99 and 123. 8 R. Nath, Colour Decoration of Mughal Architecture (D. B. Taraporewala and Sons, Bombay, 1972).

Kapurthala holds a position of its own in the creation of art and architectural master. pieces. Palaces designed by an eminent French architect were built at a cost of five million rupees in the renaissance style and a mosque was constructed in the Moorish genre. Miniature painting and manuscript illustrations vigorously continued in this state and the ruler who belonged to the Ahluwalia community of the cis-Sutlej region took keen interest in them. Among the buildings of great artistic merit here are the Shalimar Bagh constructed by Maharaja Fateh Singh, the Court Hall outside the city resembling the Chief Court of Lahore and built at a cost of five lakhs of rupees by Maharaja Jagdit Singh, Randhir College, Cattomement, Kothi, Library, gardens and parks.

Yet another noteworthy princely Sikh state of the Phulkian region is Jind. After the death of his father Maharaja Sarup Singh on 26 January 1864 Raghbir Singh ascended the throne on 31 March 1864 and made Sangrur his capital. He built markets on the lines of Jaipur, a Dewan Khana, a marble Baradari and a pucca tank known as Bhuteshwar at Jind with a Shiv temple in the centre of it on the lines of the Golden temple at Amritsar. Another sacred tank named as Nag Chhetra was constructed at Safidon. Sangrur was transformed overnight and surrounded by gardens, parks and temples<sup>3</sup> to the surprise of everyone.

Only 16 miles away from the Patiala city lies the princely house of Nabha where ruler like Raja Jawwant Singh (1783-1840) and his son Raja Devidner Singh worked under the influence of a brahmin priest, Bishan Dass. They patronized bairagis much more than any other faith, started thäkur dwaras and donated jagirs for their maintenance. Sanskiit language was accorded great respect and the Hindu way of prostrating before any deity was enforced in the court. Raja Hira Singh (1843-1911) executed some important works of an and architecture, among them a residence built at a cost of 50 thousand rupees and another in Pucca Bagh at a cost of two lakhs of rupees. All the four queens were provided with separate palaces in the fort. The frescoes in the Rani Mahal in one of these palaces an similar to those painted at Patiala in the Sheesh Mahal. There is every possibility of artist migrating from Patiala to Nabha and farther in search of new patrons, higher wages, jāgin etc. The unmistakable fact is that the artists who worked for some time at Basohli, Chambi and Guler also worked later at Lahore, Patiala, Sangrur and Nabha, since there was 10 restriction on the movement of persons from one place to another. A critical and compre hensive survey of the artists' movement from place to place points to the fact that this are has been largely left out of study by the general historians as well as art historian of national repute. Although we have not provided here a comprehensive account 6 cultural development under the patronage of Sikh rulers of the Panjab plains, clearly the showed religious tolerance for other people's faith and zealously patronized fine arts both in the trans-Sutlej and cis-Sutlej regions of Panjab.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Khushwant Singh, History of Sikhs (Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 323-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sir Lawrence, Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India (Bombay, 1930), p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> Giani Gian Singh, op. cit., p. 163.

# NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

# METHODS AND PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY OF FEUDALISM IN EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIA

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R. S. Sharma

The characterization of the pre-colonial phase in Indian history has received some attention in recent years. Interestingly enough, Marxist historians have questioned the unchanging character of Indian society based on the Asiatic mode of production. On the other hand non-Marxist and even anti-Marxist historians emphasize the validity of this mode and outdo Marx in bringing out the "regenerative" character of the British rule in bringing about transformation. Those who wish to investigate the nature of feudalism in the Indian context are faced with the absence of any fixed theoretical model which can be applied to this country. The early concept of feudalism based on West European experience, especially that of France and England, no longer enjoys universal validity. Conditions in Chou China, in the Middle Kingdom of Egypt and Kassite Babylonia are thought to be feudal. Some emphasize the military aspect of feudalism stating that the knight's service is the key to feudal institutions; others emphasize its legal aspect—the contract between the lord and the vassal; and still others its manorial aspect in which the peasants worked as serfs in the manor of the lord. In a broader sense I consider the existence of landed intermediaries to be the essence of the feudal order which flourishes in an agrarian economy buttressed by the decline of trade and shortage of money. It is obvious that all these features will have to be taken into account and the comparative method for the study of feudalism pursued rigorously. Only then will it be possible to bring out the specific traits of Indian feudalism.

The main sources for the study of this subject in early India are the land charters issued by kings and princes in favour of religious beneficiaries. They follow a set legal formula which seems to have been used irrespective of time and place. Many technical terms used in these charters are inexplicable, and the law-books and the commentaries are not of much help. For comparison and contrast modern works on the pre-Mughal and Mughal agrarian systems will have to be consulted, for many earlier practices continued or were modified in subsequent times. Fortunately for India many of the feudal survivals have been recorded by the missionaries and administrators in the 19th century. The accounts of Buchanan relating to districts in eastern India in the first two decades of the 19th century and those of Mackenzie relating to districts in southern India during the same period can enable us to study some of the feudal practices in the reverse gear. Such accounts will have to be carefully studied if we want to make sense of the meagre references to land system and administration found in the land charters. Mention may be made of the earliest survey settlement reports which record regional variations in the system of land tenure. It will be fruitful to compare the remnants of the old system found in the 19th century with the

features of the original system obtaining in medieval times. Useful in this connection will be the knowledge of the rural setting in the 19th century. This can be provided by Bengal Peasant Life by Lal Bihari Dey (1878) and Bihar Peasant Life by Grierson (1885).

The land charters will have to be studied regionwise and in every case the local geography and economy examined. Many land charters refer to the grant of lands made in mountainous and forest areas inhabited by the aborigines. How these grants created private rights in land can be understood only by a study of the modern process by which communal land rights existing among the tribal peoples have been undermined and private land rights created. This has led to unequal distribution and enjoyment of land giving rise to some kind of landed intermediaries in the aboriginal tracts. Some anthropologists have shown how tribal societies have been undermined as a result of the rise of semifeudal or feudal practices, although they do so in the context of the prevalence of money economy. In any case the aid of anthropology will have to be enlisted for the explanation of the medieval land system.

The help of sociological and anthropological studies will be welcome in a study of the medieval political and economic system, but the baseline will have to be provided by the mastery of sources. New approaches and dimensions can make the historical investigation more meaningful and refreshing, but they cannot be a substitute for proficiency in sources. In this respect a student of feudalism in India faces the difficulty of consulting a large number of inscriptions which are scattered in various journals. Something will have to be done to compile all the land charters and to prepare a comprehensive index, if possible, with the help of the computor. This will mean a great step forward in the study

of not only feudalism but also other subjects relating to medieval India.

The charters can be supplemented by the law-books and the commentaries. But if we rely on the outer meaning of the rules laid down in the law-books we will be led away with the impression that right from the beginning down to early medieval times the polity and the land system of the country did not undergo any change, an impression which has been strengthened by the early British historiography on India. For proper investigation, therefore, we have to go behind the face value of the Dharmaśāstra provisions and look for variations in both law-books and their commentaries. Variant texts deserve our greatest attention because they give clues to the changes that appeared from time to time. For instance, some Dharmaśāstras speak of the lease of land made to sharecroppers; Yājñavalkya speaks of three hierarchical stages in the use of the same piece of land; and the commentary Mitākṣarā speaks of four kinds of hierarchical land rights in the same context. All such variations will have to be examined carefully.

The origins and growth of Indian feudalism raise several problems. If it is accepted that feudal developments began from the Gupta period onwards, how would we characterize the social, economic and political order existing in pre-Gupta times? The terms "prefeudal" and "protofeudal" can be used, but they are as vague as "pre-colonial". Early Pali texts and the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya show that villages were granted to brāhmaṇas and even to secular parties. The only major difference lies in the fact that although inscriptions are as old as the time of Aśoka they do not speak of land grants in the three

centuries preceding the Christian era.

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The second problem relates to Gupta and post-Gupta times. Although we have a large number of epigraphic land grants made in favour of religious beneficiaries we have very few in favour of chiefs, officials and other non-religious functionaries. This can be compared with land charters granted to the Church in Western Europe at the initial stage, but offers a striking contrast with European feudal developments from the ninth century onwards. The absence of land grants to non-religious parties can be explained by pointing out that these were not recorded on copper because they were not intended to last till eternity. But this may not be regarded as entirely satisfactory.

The third problem is concerned with the prevalence of forced labour in central India, western India and Rajasthan. References to the imposition of vișți in land charters from the second century A.D. to about the 10th century A.D. are found only in these areas. And these are also precisely the regions in which from the fifth century A.D. beneficiaries are given the right of enjoying the land and getting it enjoyed, cultivating the land and getting it cultivated. While vișți implies forced attachment of the peasant to some work assigned by the master, the other right implies the ejection of the peasants by the beneficiaries. The first presupposes a shortage of labour and the second indicates a surplus of peasant population. We do not know how far these practices can be reconciled and why they were confined to central and western India.

The decline in the volume of trade and shortage of money in post-Gupta times also raises some questions. Since no coins can be attributed with confidence to the long-lived dynasties of the Pālas, Pratihāras and Rāṣṭrakūṭas, it is obvious that the use of money was very restricted in this period. Although numerical methods cannot be adopted to size up the exact volume of external or internal trade in post-Gupta times, it is obvious that the supply of gold from outside had practically stopped and gold coins had become rarer in this period. In post-Gupta times the Byzantium directly acquired from China the knowledge of silk which put an end to India's silk trade with that country. In the same period China and South-East Asia learnt the cultivation of cotton and sugar from India, which put an end to trade in the two articles. And with the Arab invasion of Africa the eastern Roman empire ceased to get gold. All this led to the shortage of money and decline of trade which created conditions for the development of feudalism in the country. Comparisons are difficult to make, but it seems that the use of money in India in the four centuries following the fall of the Gupta empire was far more limited than what it was in England and France.

On the social plane we will have to find out the relation of the caste and kin to feudal developments. It is true that the hereditary caste system promoted self-sufficient economy which formed the basis of the feudal pattern of life. But this inquiry will have to be pursued further. Similarly, the role of the extended Rajput kinship whose members had to be granted land for their support in the conquered areas will have to be examined. If the Pratihāras, Paramāras, Cauhāns, Guhilas, etc., belong to the same Rajput clan, can the administrative system set up by them be regarded as clan-feudalism in which outsiders had no share in the distribution and management of villages?

Whether peasants were transferred along with the soil on which they worked is a moot point to consider. Of course the practice of transferring sharecroppers is first noticed

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in the Pallava kingdom in the third century and in several mountainous and less populated areas during the fifth-eighth centuries but not in the plains of north India. Hence in the strictly legal sense when villages were made over to beneficiaries in north India peasants were not bound to stay in them although in most charters they were specifically asked to serve the new masters. In later centuries the enormous powers conferred on the grantees to impose unspecified tax certainly reduced the peasants to a servile position. But even if attachment to the soil was not specified in the land charter, did the existing social and economic organization leave much scope for mobility? Even if they wanted to move where could the peasants go? Because of the caste system they could not become artisans and migrate to towns of which in any case the number was small.

# INVASION OF NĀDIR SHĀH: A FRENCH DOCUMENT\*

# Aniruddha Ray

An attempt has been made in this article to analyse a French document, unsigned and undated (to be called *Memoir* here), on the invasion of Hindusthan by Nādir Shāh. This was written at Chandernagore (Bengal) around 1740, i.e., after the departure of Nādir Shāh in March 1739. Since Dupleix was the head of this factory in Bengal, it is assumed that this was written by him.

Although Nādir Shāh's invasion is the theme of this *Memoir*, in our analysis here we would be looking into the particular attitude of the French towards the socio-political condition prevailing in Hindusthan and the reaction of the Indians facing the invasion. To do this properly we have divided this article into separate sections as follows:

I: Historicity

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II: Provenance of the Memoir and its relationship with Bengal

III: Literary style and its attitude to history

IV: Origins of French Imperialist thoughts vis-à-vis 18th century India

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# Historicity

The *Memoir* clearly mentions three sources of information. However, it does not give equal priority to and emphasis on all these three sources, thereby showing a certain bias which we shall see later. These sources are the following:

- (a) Letters of Voulton from Delhi
- (b) News-reports in Persian
- (c) Rumours from different and unspecified sources

<sup>\*</sup> The summary of this paper was presented to the Muzaffarpur session of Indian History Congress (Medieval section) in 1972 under a different title.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This manuscript is in Archives Nationales (to be called AN here), Paris, Colony, C(2) 197, ff. 94-104v°. We are deeply grateful to the Centre D'Etudes Indiennes de Sciences Sociales, Paris, for making available a microfilm copy to us. This document has not been consulted by L. Lockhart in Nādir Shāh (London, 1938) (to be referred as Lockhart).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Memoir clearly mentions that it has been written when Nādir Shāh"...leaves Shalimar to return to Persia where it is presumed that he would be at present" (f. 103v°). Nādir Shāh reached Herat in June 1740 (Lockhart, p. 179). Besides, the last reference of date in the Memoir is a letter of 26 July 1739 by Sr. Beaumont from Bander Abbas to Bengal. Beaumont left Pondicherry for Bander Abbas in April 1739 and died there on 29 October (A. Martineau, "Le Premier Consulat de France a Bassora", Revuedel'histoire des colonies Françaises, 1917, i & iv; P. Olangier, Le Government de Benoist Dumas, Paris, 1936, pp. 216-20).

Born in 1719, Joseph Louis de Voulton deserted the French army at Pondicherry and became a physician. With the help of the noble Qamar-ud-dīn Khān he became friendly with Nizāmu'l-Mulk and gained entrance to the court of Delhi, ultimately becoming the physician of the Emperor Muḥammed Shāh. By 1739 he was sufficiently important to be included among the 10 nobles to be present in the camp of Nādir Shāh after the fateful battle of Karnal. By that time he was already holding a manṣab with two jāgīrs. 1

During the invasion Voulton wrote a series of letters to different places in India. On the basis of his own letters he wrote in Persian an account of the invasion which was published from Lisbon in 1740 in Portuguese to be referred here as *Noticia*, one of the earliest publications to appear in Europe on the invasion.

The letters of Voulton, most of which have survived (though not consulted by Lockhart in his celebrated work Nadir Shah), form the chief source of the Memoir, which, according to our estimate, is earlier than the Noticia.<sup>3</sup> Possibly independent of each other, both these are chiefly based on the same letters of Voulton.

The chief merit of the *Memoir* lies in its critical attitude to its sources. Even Voulton's letters, the principal source, are sometimes referred to as "exaggeration", at least when other sources are available for making a comparison. For example, Voulton's estimate of plunder of Delhi by Nādir Shāh has been rejected by the *Memoir*.<sup>4</sup> This critical attitude becomes all the more valuable in the face of Nādir Shāh not permitting the news-runners to go out of Delhi<sup>5</sup> and all sorts of information being afloat in different parts of the empire.

- <sup>1</sup> Letter of Voulton to Dumas at Pondicherry, 8 June 1738, where Voulton stated that Muhammed Shāh had given him two  $j\bar{a}g\bar{t}rs$ , one valued at 40 thousand rupees per year besides the salary of two thousand rupees per month, two elephants and two horses (AN, C(2) 78, ff  $220v^{\circ}$ -221).
- <sup>2</sup> Verdadeira et Exacta Noticia des Progressos de Thomas Kouli Khan Schach de Persia no Imperio de Gram Mogor, Escrita na Longuana Persiana em Dely em 21 de Abril de 1739, e Mandada a Roma por Mons. Voulton, Lisbon, 1740: tr. into English with notes by L. Lockhart, "De Voulton's Noticia", Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, iv, pt. ii (1926), 223-6 (to be referred here as Noticia). For Voulton's life and marriage, see Introduction, 224. Lockhart suggested that Voulton had written it for over a year after 13 May 1739.
- There are enough indications to prove this. The Noticia has incorporated the additions/alterations of details recorded in the letters of Voulton, while the Memoir has followed the letters without change. Besides, the mood of the times, the depression of the Indians after the battle of Karnal, for example, as given in the letters of Voulton has been preserved in the Memoir, but is absent in the Noticia. Also, the Noticia not only omits the nobles implicated in the riot, as Qamar-ud-din is involved, but also plays down the massacre in Delhi, while the Memoir names the nobles and reflects the agony and despair of the times, following closely the letters of Voulton. The chronology of the Noticia is also wrong and as Lockhart has observed, it gives a sympathetic treatment to both Nizām and Muḥammed Shāh (Noticia, p. 227).
- <sup>4</sup> Voulton at first estimated the plunder at 300 crores, which the *Memoir* rejects as exaggeration (f. 102). In a letter from Chandernagore to the Company Dupleix confirms Voulton's estimate of 300 crores (AN, C (2) 76, f. 226v°). Another estimate of 115 crores is given by Voulton in his Noticia, which Lockhart rejects as exaggeration (Noticia, fn. 5). The same estimate appears also in the *Memoir* (f. 102). But the last two estimates differ in particular items, which confirms Lockhart's suspicion that this estimate of 115 crores is not done by Voulton (Noticia, p. 227). Could it come from Sr. Martin who was in Delhi then (AN, C(2) 76, f. 225)?
- <sup>5</sup> The Noticia mentioned 300 messengers slain by the enemy (p. 230). See also anonymous Persian Journal translated into English by S. H. Askari, "A Contemporary Correspondence describing the Events at Delhi at the Time of Nadir Shah's Invasion", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (Bombay session, 1947), pp. 357-65.

In case two sources on a particular event differ, the *Memoir* states both the versions. For example, the *Memoir* records a letter of Voulton, dated 27 December 1738, wherein it is stated that "Nazer Khan, Governor of Kabul and its dependencies, had betrayed his master, handed over the city to Nādir Shāh and joined him with hundred horsemen". The *Memoir* then gives the Persian news-report, dated 13 January 1739, which treats the affair in a different way. Nazer <u>Kh</u>ān, states the *Memoir*:

encouraged by the orders of the Mogol, had assembled an army of Pathans and had not been lacking in opposing Nader Chah with this, although he had not received the help he had asked for and which he was expecting from Delhi. There was combat between the two armies where advantage was indecisive and that later the zamindar of Kabul and the Pathans, attached to Nader Chah, had conducted this Prince by another route to Peshawar, which he had captured. Being informed of this, Nazer Khān had fled. But he was pursued and arrested. As a price of his ransom, he had handed over Kabul. 1

It is clear, therefore, that Voulton, who had access to the leading umrā's of Delhi, was not getting correct information. Could it be that Voulton was merely reflecting the opinion deliberately circulated by the nobles to show that Delhi's responsibility in the fall of Kabul, the gateway to India, was minimal? One might also postulate, perhaps from hindsight, that the *Memoir* is hinting at the fact of the resistance of the lower leadership, particularly at the local level, and the let-up by the higher up. This hint of a gap in the different levels of leadership and their consequent reaction, which might vary in the face of critical situations, runs throughout the *Memoir*.

Perhaps the immediate and stronger reason of putting both these versions in the Memoir<sup>2</sup> is its difficulty in accepting any of these, which shows the contemporaneity of the Memoir. This is relevant particularly when we know that the Memoir usually tries to get confirmation of any particular news item, a common practice among the Europeans. In putting the two versions the Memoir maintains the chronological order by placing first the report received earlier.

In case the source is lacking, the *Memoir* states it straightaway and comments on the available source. For example, regarding the conference after the battle of Karnal the *Memoir* writes: "For this conference one is obliged to such report and the general detail in the account of Sr. Voulton informs everything. It is exaggerated because the news in Persian does not treat it at all". That Voulton, a Frenchman and close to the Emperor, cannot be relied in the face of absence of information from the Indian side is slightly surprising. The *Memoir* is therefore certain of information from the Indian side, as it deduces from the negative quality, i.e., the absence of it. In that case the Persian news-reports must have been emanating from a source much closer to court politics and not from the circle of merchants.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> AN, C(2) 76, ff. 224-5. The Memoir wrongly puts the date at one place as 24 December (f. 94 v°) and at another place 29 December (f. 95 v°).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Memoir, ff. 94-5. <sup>3</sup> Ibid. f. 97.

That credence is given to Persian news-reports is seen in two other unrelated incidents. Regarding the "plan" of Nādir Shāh¹ and the issue of coins by him² the Memoir unhesitatingly accepts the Persian news-reports, although these are not the only source open to it. This attitude of giving much more credence to news emanating from the Indians continued up to the British pioneers in India, from which the later British historians such as Peter Hardy and Vincent Smith went to the other extreme. The Memoir discusses different rumours, which are dismissed in the absence of confirmation from Voulton or Persian news-reports or from any other agency. One may ask why it takes the trouble of putting these at all. Perhaps the reason is that the Memoir wants to put on record everything about the invasion of Nādir Shāh and the reaction of the Indians. This is then woven into a theme and written with a particular objective, which we shall see later.

While the *Memoir* moves around these two or three sources, it is surprising that there is no reference to information coming from any other European source, although at one stage during the invasion some common programme of European nations was thought of.<sup>3</sup> If we compare the situation with another revolt in late 17th century Bengal,<sup>4</sup> where the Europeans had moved in concert we can offer the hypothesis that by 1739 the situation in Bengal had started enabling the Europeans to move independently of each other.

Thus the critical attitude to its own sources, the hesitation in accepting any item of information without verification and the strict adherence to the chronological order lift the *Memoir* to the level of historical writing, although one notes a certain bias in the acceptance or rejection of its sources. Its medieval roots are not severed when we see at the same time the mood of the times, the concern for the immediate. For this we would have to see the provenance of the *Memoir* in the next section.

### II

# Provenance of the Memoir

Although the *Memoir* bears no mark of its place of origin, there are indications within it to show that it was written in Bengal, obviously at the French factory of Chandernagore. The identification becomes easier if we compare this *Memoir* with a letter of Dupleix from Chandernagore dated 4 August 1739.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. f. 104. "The news in Persian...says that he wants to go to besiege Constantinople and to crush the Turks. After that he will conquer China".

<sup>3</sup> See an article by Sukumar Bhattacharya, "Nadir Shah's Invasion: Its Reaction in Bengal", Bengal Past and Present, pt. ii (July-December 1954), 7-15.

5 AN, C(2) 76, f. 226v°.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. f. 99v<sup>o</sup>.... these Roupies are of 12 massas dupois or 20 grams of more weight than those of Mamet Chah". If we take it as 12 mashas, this would tally with the Ilāhī era coin of Akbar. But in case of calculation of grams this would be 478 grains (taking French gram of 20.08 as equal to 300 grains following the calculation of R. B. Whitehead, Catalogue of the Coins in the Punjab Museum, īii, Oxford, 1934, 193), a kind of coin not found so far.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A. Ray, "Revolt of Sobha Singh-A Case Study", Bengal Past and Present (July-Dec. 1969 & January-June 1970).

Not only does Dupleix in this letter draw heavily from the letters of Voulton, but there is also a striking similarity with the *Memoir* in the spelling of names and other sundry items such as the plunder of Delhi by Nādir Shāh. Moreover, as in the *Memoir*, the letter bears the mood of the times—its urgency and concern for the immediate. For example, the classic sentence regarding Delhi after its sack ("It resembles at present a bombarded city") is used also in the *Memoir*.

But the striking point of resemblance is the exclusive and almost overwhelming importance given to Bengal in both the letter of Dupleix and the *Memoir*, as seen in the two quotations given below:

His (i.e. Nādir Shāh's) authority was soon recognised in Bengal and he was also proclaimed as King of Hindusthan at Mouxadabad. On the 4th of April last one had issued for sometime from the mint of this place the Roupie as the coin of this province....The Roupie...struck by Nader Chah did not run in the market and had been refunded by the most part....Soujah Khan of Bengal is dead. Sarfras Khan, his son, had taken, till the new order, the reins of the Government. One cannot be assured positively if he would be confirmed, that he or another would be the Nabob....<sup>2</sup>

The uncertainty of the times, the recent changes and the tense atmosphere are brought out clearly in this letter. The tone of the *Memoir* is more assured, at least regarding Sarfarāz Khān, but is equally anxious about the recent events. To quote from the *Memoir*:

The uncertainty in which one was in Bengal on what was happening gave rise to extravagant news, either on account of Nader Chah or on that of Mamet Chah....This wonder passed upto Mouxadabad....Although Nader Chah had not sent any troop in Bengal his authority was recognised there as quickly as one was informed that he was master of Delhi. On 4th April at Mouxadabad Nawab Sarfras Khan proclaimed him (i.e., Nādir Shāh) as King of India.... It is true that at the end of his raid they soon repented at Mouxadabad. It was even for some time suggested that a Prince of the Royal blood, Karim Chah, should be taken out of the fortress and be seated on the throne. He had been prisoner there during the reign of Mamet Chah and was passed as blind.... It was said that the Prince refused the proposal made to him. What is certain is that this rise of shield-bearers had no result....3The roupies or the coins of Nader Chah did not run in the market and had been refunded by the most part....4

The similarities are obvious although the time-gap is clear. This time-gap becomes all the more clear when we see that the *Memoir* does not mention at all the problems of

<sup>1</sup> Memoir, f. 100v°.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Dupleix's letter, op. cit., ff. 226-226v°.

No corroboration has been found of this incident which obviously is a Paik revolt in the palace.

Memoir, f. 101v°

coinage of Nādir Shāh, which both the contemporary French and English letters testify,1 This overwhelming importance of Bengal in both the Memoir and the letter of Dupleix is, however, absent in the Noticia written by Voulton from Delhi, in which Delhi becomes the central piece without the tense and uncertain mood of the times.

We have already seen that the Memoir, moving within a limited framework of a few sources, has been much wider in its outlook than the Noticia or the Life of Nadir Shah by Le Margne,<sup>2</sup> who utilized Voulton's Noticia. Not only does the Memoir prove its origin with preoccupation in the affairs of Bengal, but in a way is biased in its terms and categories of verification. In outlining these terms and categories the Memoir presents the French attitudes and standpoints, with which we would be dealing in the next two sections.

### III

# Literary Style and Attitude to History

Since the Cartesian rational method displaced the Aristotelian and Thomistic views, doubt and the attempt to find mechanism of the nature of society3 began to be prevalent in the French thinking.4 This attempt is also noticeable in the Memoir. For example, in its attempt to find out the technical causes of the superiority of Nādir Shāh over the Indians the Memoir lays stress on the discipline of the troops of Nādir Shāh "who knows to utilise them in convenient movement".5 The Indians on the other hand "are divided amongst themselves, the soldiers collected hastily without discipline...." Thus the emphasis on uniform, collective movement— discipline—has been taken as a superior quality in place of the individuality of the common soliders, so long praised in Indian ballads. The Memoir then proceeds to give specific information about warfare in India, which includes dress, food habits and weapons and ends with a cryptic comment that "Infantry does not serve much in India".7 Most of this, however, is taken from Voulton. The only difference between

<sup>2</sup> L. Lockhart, "Le Margne's Life of Nadir Shah", Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society, xii, pt. iii (September 1926), 321-33. Margne's book Vida de Thomas Kouli Khan (Madrid, 1741, tr. into English, London, 1741) draw heavily from the Nation (L. J.). London, 1741) drew heavily from the Noticia (Lockhart, p. 328).

<sup>3</sup> For a brief analysis see J. Browski & B. Hazlish, The Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. J. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See J. W. Western Intellectual Tradition (Penguin, 1970, Island, Hutchinson, Hutchin edn, Hutchinson, 1960), pp. 252-66. See also K. Martino, French Liberal Thoughts in 18th Gentury (London, 1962)

For the official consultation of the French at Pondicherry see the published proceedings: Process Verbaux des deliberations du Conseil Superieur de Pondichery, Tome iii (1914), 210-13. See also an unpublished letter of the Governor Dumas from Pondicherry dated 15 October 1739 (AN, C(2) 76 ff. 176-7). For the English letters see besides S. Bhattacharya, op. cit., the chapter entitled "Nadir Shah: From Some Original English Records". Studies in Marcha History in A. G. Pawar Shah: From Some Original English Records", Studies in Maratha History, i, ed, A. G. Pawar (Kolhapur, 1971), 82-117.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;His (i.e. Descartes') second contribution, however, was a kind of rationalism— logically deriving effects from causes—which has had a retrieved to the contribution. effects from causes—which has had great influence and has remained essentially French way of this king on all problems' (Browski, op. cit., p. 265). Again "Descartes' rationalism conquered France but not Germany or England" (Ibid. p. 266).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Memoir, f. 96.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. f. 96v°.

the Memoir and the Noticia in this respect is that in the former it is grouped together in one place, while in the latter it lies scattered, as separate and isolated items of information. Thus in the Memoir, with a theme in the background, one can see the rationale of the fight, the technical causes of success and failure, in a sense that results are predictable. Thus a mechanistic view—of cause and its result—is systematized in the Memoir in a schematic presentation which is totally absent in the Noticia. But the Memoir goes beyond a technical report as it tries to see the mechanism of the political events with its far-reaching influence on the society as a whole, an attitude lacking in the Noticia. The Memoir has tried to understand the behaviour of the nobility, showing the gap between it and the common people. It associates this gap with the failure of the Indians to resist the invasion, thus giving a perspective rarely found elsewhere.

On 27 December 1738, before the fateful battle of Karnal, Voulton wrote a letter to Sr. Groiselle, chief of the French Company at Patna. This letter forms the base of both the Memoir and the Noticia. But interestingly enough, Voulton omits a whole passage in his Noticia concerning the role of the nobility which he has himself written to Groiselle in his letter. The Memoir on the other hand builds up an analysis of the role of the upper class and the consequent weakness of the state. Let us see a fragment of the passage from the letter of Voulton:

It is said that he (i.e., Nādir Shāh) is a very good judge of the troops as well as of others. But he fleeces the banians and the Governors of the places through where he passes and does not leave a soul. He is extremely severe to those who do not take his protection. Half of the population desires him as sovereign, because the Emperor is so good that one does not make any account of him.<sup>2</sup>

When the Noticia was published in 1741 Voulton omitted the whole passage for the obvious reason that he did not want to lose his two jāgīrs and a career for writing something in the moments of agony and uncertainty. The Memoir omits the last sentence, perhaps for a similar reason. But then it changes the perspectives and weaves the "desire" of "half the population" into a general statement of the oppression of the upper class and the inefficiency of the ministers as follows:

The bad government of this Empire seems to have prepared this grand event. The people were crushed by the oppression of the big. Mamet Chah, Mogol Emperor, Prince of weak intelligence bordering upto imbecility, was only occupied in pleasures, leaving the care of his kingdom to Kam Douran and Kamourdi Khan, his two principal ministers. These two nobles were divided among themselves and, being little concerned with the public good, cared only to accumulate the wealth. The state is without troops. The Omrahs and the Mansabdars charged to maintain a certain number in receipt of pay did not maintain these.... Nader Chah treated with much softness those who submitted to him. But he

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> AN, C(2) 76, ff. 224-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. f. 225. Voulton writes also the same thing to Dumas at Pondicherry on 8 June 1738 (AN, C(2) 76, ff. 220v° -221).

was extremely severe to those who resisted him. This smart policy, helped by the depression and the discontent of the people, increased his army.1

Since no detailed study has been done of the pre-1739 period, it is difficult to hazard any guess about the relation between the discontent of the people and the success of Nādir Shāh. But his relatively easy entry and slightly difficult exit<sup>2</sup> signify that the *Memoir* might not be too wrong.

One must confess here that this kind of analysis—inefficiency, discontent, Nādir's judgement, increase in the size of his army—is not new to the French. Francois Bernier systematized the oppression and failure of the nobility into what was later called "Oriental Despotism". Almost at the same period Francois Martin, the first French Governor of Pondicherry, made a similar analysis in looking at the revolt of Sobha Singh at the end of the 17th century in Bengal. In his letter of 4 August 1739 much later Dupleix identified the imbecility of the Emperor as the basic cause: "In establishing Mamet Chah on the throne, he (i.e. Nādir Shāh) had done justice to his imbecility..." In a way, therefore, the Memoir has been treading on the French thoughts already expressed.

But the *Memoir* reveals, perhaps not deliberately, more than inefficiency and discontent. It hints at injustice in the structure of the society itself—the structure in which the upper class has usurped the position because of convention or procedure and not by dint of qualities. This is best illustrated in the set of rumours, quoted below from the *Memoir*, giving us a glimpse of the mood of the people:

It is claimed that the first Prince (i.e., Nādir Shāh) had presented the latter (i.e., Muḥammed Shāh) with a plate of gold full of pearls and stones without giving him anything to eat. On the complaint of this Prince that it was not possible to eat this sort of things he had been answered that these materials had caused the misery and that if he was occupied in acquiring these to fortify the places, he would still be the master to eat these at his convenience. It is added also that this unfortunate Prince who came to render himself at the discretion of Nader Chah had been put in a cage on an elephant, hands tied by a chain of gold. In this humiliating condition he had accompanied the conqueror in his country to Delhi. But all these news had been found false. <sup>5</sup>

The first rumour clearly underlines the unjust accumulation of wealth and the scarcity condition of Delhi during the invasion about which we know very little. But the second has more depth. The elephant represents the royalty and the cage is associated with animal. In the background of this royalty maintaining the outward formalities of splen-

<sup>1</sup> Memoir, f. 95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W. Irvine, Later Mughals (Calcutta, 1922), pp. 375-6.

<sup>3</sup> A. Ray, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> AN C(2) 76, f. 227. The Memoir writes the same in f. 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Memoir, ff. 99v°-100. Nādir's letter to his son shows that he did not want to humiliate Muhammed Shāh, J. Malcolm, "Two Letters of Nadir Shah", Asialic Researches, x (1808), 526-47. Malcolm, however, warns that "these letters are perhaps calculated to give the reader a more favourble impression of the character of Nadir Shah" (p. 529).

dour the position of the Emperor is reversed. Thus the power and wealth of the ruling class, symbolized by the Emperor who is seen humbled before his own people, point out the aspiration of the people. Does not this reverse position of the highest authority, in a formal and hierarchical society, with the unjust accumulation of wealth, justify the invasion of Nādir Shāh, desired by "half the population".<sup>1</sup>

We must make it clear, however, that the *Memoir* is not trying to focus the people by ascribing to them the power or will that can change the structure of the society. On the contrary in this *Memoir* the individual is portrayed with much more finality of power to choose between the different alternatives presented. The individual is finally the hero round whom and because of whom events take a turn.

The Memoir in reality is a clash or interaction of three personalities. Nādir Shāh is "a born warrior", of "an exact justice", but is "feared and respected by his army whom he rewards and punishes properly". The second choice is the Nizām ,who has presented himself at every turn of opportunities to exploit the situation for the good of state? but is thwarted by the third, Muhammed Shāh, always surrounded by a "crowd of flatterers". The choice of the Nizām to a higher position than that of the Emperor is partly because of Voulton's particular emphasis on him and partly because of his role as a kingmaker, who wields real power. The Emperor-a mere formality- ratifies or thwarts the decisions. The Nigam, therefore, stands midway between the brilliance of the first and stupidity of the third. With no leadership this divided house, the empire of the Mughals. presents a model ground for kingmakers. The Memoir has perhaps overemphasized the conjunctions at vital moments, when the decision of a particular individual becomes most important. We shall see later that this overemphasis is due to the subjective condition of the French-Dupleix's anxious efforts to free himself from the restrictions from home to launch a "new policy". But partly this is also due to the literary style-the mechanistic presentation of the great drama.

The entire *Memoir* is arranged in such a way that the events are grouped in separate divisions with pause for comments/speeches/rumours by either of the parties. These act like curtain-raisers, leading to a dramatic climax in each division. Each climax is reached by the interaction of both the parties and then alternatives are presented, which the Indian side fails to exploit. This sort of presentation sounds like a succession of waves leading to the gradual decline of the power of the Indians—a sort of mechanical view of events with a logic explaining the drama.

In a way this is a method for the Memoir to explain the events, to understand the succession of events—the hidden forces—which is a departure from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Does this originate from the peasants? See an interesting parallel in south of France in the late 17th century in the work of Emanuel Leroy Ladurie, *Les Paysans de Languedoc* (Paris, 1966), pp. 607-29. The English rumours, however, are mostly concerned with the problems of the Nizām or Muḥammed Shāh.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nizām's role during the invasion has caused a lot of controversy. For details see Yusuf Husain: *The First Nizam* (2nd edn, Bombay, 1963), pp. 186-91; *Lockhart*, pp. 123-4. Z. Malik, "Khan-i Dowran, Mir Bakshi of Md. Shah", *Medieval India—A Miscellany*, i (Bombay, 1968), 220-3. The English blamed the Nizām (Bhattacharya, op. cit., p. 13).

Aristotelian concept, where nature cannot be understood. In another sense this is also a part of medieval legacy, where events are isolated and disjointed, bridged only by the expression of sentiments/speeches on the common theme that runs in the background Thus in the *Memoir* medieval roots are not totally severed and it hovers on the margin of the medieval and the modern.

The divisions are clear and in most cases end with alternatives presented to the Indians, who gradually lose control of the situation. For example, in the division ending before the battle of Karnal the Nizām urges the Emperor to fight, who agrees. But "Next day, none agreed with Nizamoulmoulouk and the Emperor and his confidants, as warlike as him, wanted to raise camp". 1 At the end of the next division, after the battle of Karnal the Nizām arranges a truce with Nādir. But Muḥammed Shāh refuses to confirm this Nādir thus takes the road to Delhi, where a bloody riot erupts, ending with the coronation of Muḥammed Shāh and the departure of Nādir.

In the description of this great drama the Memoir presents the notes of contrasta typical feature of the decline of the middle ages.2 The violence of the invasion is contrasted with a low and sombre tone that runs through this Memoir. Nadir Shah gives colourful speeches in a bantering tone while the entire accent of the Memoir lies in bitter and cynical appeal. On a much more concrete plane this contrast is vividly portrayed in the hurried, frenzied and panicky Nizām entreating to calm the rather aloof Nadir, his clear-cut decisions against the vacillation of Muhammed Shāh, the contrast of the two armies, the justness of Nādir against the "oppression", Delhi burning and thousands dying in agony while Nādir Shāh sits calmly eating sweetments at a mosque in Chandni Chowk.3 All these make it much more contemporary and its personalities much more colourful and living. Nādir Shāh looks brilliant but less mythical, perhaps more of an adventurer and romantic than his later biographers made him to be.4 But the dominant note is woven on the "will" of the individual, who can exploit the opportunity and change the course of history. To understand this weaving of the less mythical hero with the socio-political structure and opportunities of history where the will of an individual assumes finality we will have to turn to the last section to discuss the contemporary French objectives in late medieval India—their predicament and their search for solutions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Memoir, f. 98v°, on the basis of Voulton.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Z. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (New York, 1954), p. 10.

legitimate sovereign" (f. 99v°). Again, "... this Prince is as calm as if he has been at Ispahan He took a hunting party on the other side of the river Jamuna which flows at the foot Delhi" (ff. 105-105v°) after establishing Muḥammed Shāh on the throne. For his eating sweet meat see ff. 100-100v°.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> According to Malcolm, Nādir Shāh "is chiefly known in Europe by the report of his tyrann and cruelties, above all by the massacre of Delhi, which reached European narrators through the exaggerated statements of the surviving inhabitants of that unfortunate city" (op. cit. p. 529). Till 1740-1 Nādir Shāh was known in Europe as a "romantic figure" (Lockharl, Le Margne's Life of Nadir Shah, p. 322). Le Margne's Life of Nadir Shah, p. 322).

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#### IV

### Origins of French Imperialist Thoughts vis-à-vis 18th Century India

The Memoir depicts the political condition of the tottering Mughal empire and the near-collapse of the central authority under a weak ruler and a divided and pleasure seeking nobility. "The Marathas, people of the Deccan and one time tributary, have reversed the role....The little resistance they have met shows the facility one would have in seizing this Empire".1 Although the French reports from the early 18th century have been speaking in this vein of the imminence of the civil war, Voulton's Noticia does not make any such generalization. With the coming of Dupleix the tone of the reports changes. To see this we will have to trace the relation between Dupleix and the local government in Bengal, which profoundly influences this tone.

The history of the relation between the Bengal Nawabs and Dupleix is a continuous history of the "vexations" of the "Moors", as Dupleix has seen it. In the words of the noted French historian, Alfred Martineau,2 the Bengal Nawabs after 1732 established chaukis or posts of toll all along the river, where the boats of the Europeans were stopped for contribution. Dupleix estimates that by these means the Nobob could "draw within one year at least 100 lakhs of rupees". In a letter of 30 September 1732 Dupleix himself writes:

...the name of the Europeans, that they (i.e., Moors) respected at one time, is nothing but an object of ridicule to them; they look at us as an inexhaustible source from where they can draw when they think it proper. The Nabob, sold to everything that is more vile, leaves the care of the affairs to a band of tramps who only dream to fill their purses.3

Dupleix's feelings from 1733 to 1735 are not known since his letters of the period have not been studied. But his letters from Chandernagore during 1736-41 indicate that the situation had deteriorated. By that time Ḥājī Aḥmed and Muḥammed 'Alī were controlling the affairs of Bengal.

It seems that after 1737 Dupleix tried to organize some sort of resistance to the demands of the "Moors". In 1732 his proposal of a military demonstration and arrest of Muslim ships in the Ganga4—a pattern that the Portuguese pioneers had set up—had been rejected. In a very poignant letter dated 4 April 1739, after the episode of Nādir Shāh, Dupleix wrote to Dumas, head of the French Company at Pondicherry:

... I must confess to you since when the idea came to me that I repent everyday for not acting on several occasions with vigour. I was nearly assured of success, but the fear of the delay of a few ships and perhaps of being condemned a little

<sup>1</sup> Memoir, f. 94.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. Martineau, Dupleix et l'Inde Française (Paris, 1929), pp. 174-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 184.

too lightly had always stopped me....The present revolution is very certain proof of the little fear that these miserable Moors should inspire us....It does not appear to me suitable in this new government to put ourselves on the same footing as we had been....It is necessary to choose a part more honourable and proper to the honour of the nation and the interests of our masters. Everything depends on the beginning; if one does badly, everything is lost as a result and we will perhaps find ourselves in a much more sad situation....1

Dumas replied on 9 June. He agreed with the new line but he would rather leave it to the Company to decide. To Pondicherry, as to the English, the invasion was just an "affair", a problem of trade. Pondicherry advised Dupleix to leave the area and to manage

things through Voulton.3

What is striking in the *Memoir* is the frequent mention of the suddenness or "rapidity" of the conquest of Nādir Shāh. "History presents little, in its expanse, the example of a revolution so strange and so sudden as that of the conquest of Hindusthan by Nader Chah". The misrule and oppression helped him much to overcome the obstacles which would have prevented him from advancing to Delhi with so much rapidity. "The rapidity of the conquest of this Prince had spread so much wonder in the lands of the Empire that it submitted on the principal orders..."<sup>5</sup>

Thus the model is clearly built—the model of a rapid strike to be the master of the capital, when people are discontented and the state torn asunder by internal division. To exploit the situation the hero must be humane—just and severe—protector of the weak. Therefore, the character, personality and the human "will" intermingle with the situation to make not the "cruel Nadir", as the later biographers made him to be, but a brilliant general ready to take quick decision—an image that Dupleix tried to build up seven years later.

To exploit this situation with quick decisions it is necessary to forge alliances: the role of the kingmaker thus becomes crucial. Therefore, the Nizām is shown in a favourable light as he opens up different possibilities but the opportunities are missed by the vacillation of the Emperor and the divided opinion of the ministers. Did not Dupleix's position present the same problems and conditions as crept unconsciously in his attempt to understand the hidden causes of success and failure?

Nādir Shāh did not stay permanently. "...one can apply to him rather than really to Alexander the famous word that he had come to India to travel rather than to fight". The invader became a traveller, ready to go back after the job was done. And the job was "plunder", the extent of the booty, which excited the cupidity of the European.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 185-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Correspondance du Conseil Superieur de Pondichery avec le Conseil de Chandernagore (Pondicherry, 1927). Tome iii, 72 (Letter of 20 April, 1739).

<sup>4</sup> Memoir, f. 94.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. f. 94 & f. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. f. 104.

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ob n. "One would have difficulty in believing that the wealth of Hindusthan was like that". The age-old wonder of Europe "repents" each day and does not care how it is taken. Nādir Shāh, unlike Alexander, is justified in taking it away, not only because so much is there, but because the people "desire" him as sovereign. They are being ruled anyway by "rascals" who only dream of "filling up their purses". Therefore, "rapidity" of advance is called for, which will "reverse the role". Never did a conquest seem more justified than this one.

Thus the invasion presented a model to Dupleix, who, significantly enough, started his game of making and unmaking the Nawāb only seven years later, without of course the concomitant elements built up in the model. We, therefore, need to take another look at the condition of Hindusthan prior to the invasion of Nādir Shāh and modify the views regarding Dupleix given by the classical biographers such as Martineau and Dodwell.<sup>2</sup> Martineau<sup>3</sup> had of course hinted that the failure of the Mughal empire in facing Nādir Shāh had revealed to Dupleix its inherent weaknesses. But Martineau did not tell us these weaknesses, the process of thinking and the kind of involvement that led Dupleix to start a game already late. This is precisely what this *Memoir* does. As such, we will have to shift our historical focus on the origin of the French imperialist thinking before 1745, executed by Dupleix, which later became, according to Dodwell, the model of Clive's conquests. This *Memoir* hints at the need for such a reappraisal. A further study of both Dupleix and Clive, of their pre-1745 activities, will certainly throw more light on the origin of European imperialist thinking vis-à-vis 18th century India and the process of transition from medieval to modern.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. f. 102; Noticia, 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H. Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive* (London, 1920), pp. 15-6. He also referred to the absence of political motive of Dupleix (p. 104).

Martineau, op. cit., p. 192. "... Dupleix can say with reason that after so much arrogance, the fall of the Mogol would appear in future a paradox without precedence".

## REVIEW ARTICLE

# IRON AND URBANIZATION\* IN THE GANGA BASIN

R. S. Sharma

If we leave out the problem of urbanization in the Harappan sites, practically no work deals with urbanism in ancient India. Some books catalogue and describe ancient towns chiefly on the basis of literary sources, but practically nothing has been done so far to examine the results of excavations in the last 25 years to explain the rise, growth, lay-out, etc., of the urban sites. Urbanization relating to the early historic period, from the sixth century B.C., has been discussed in a recent issue of Purātattva, but it lacks in theoretical perspectives and adequate archaeological data. Therefore the publication of this slim and compact book by Mr Amalanand Ghosh, former Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India, is most welcome. It gives evidence of his intimate acquaintance with both archaeological and literary sources relating to ancient towns. Recent sociological works on urbanization have also been consulted and the author shows awareness of anthropological approaches to the subject though he is a little chary of using them. The result is a solid and thoughtful study providing a few insights.

Most conclusions reached by Mr Ghosh are balanced and take into account the total picture of urbanism. He rightly rules out the contribution of the Harappa culture to the rise of towns in northern India, particularly in the Ganga basin. We agree with him that urban developments in northern India in the sixth century B.C. were neither inherited from the Harappa culture nor imported from Persia or Central Asia. The first view is propagated by those who see in the Harappa culture the beginnings of the Indian style of civilization and also by those who ascribe it to the Aryans who are considered responsible for setting the Indian pattern of life. The second view is stressed by Wheeler and others who would like to attribute all significant developments in India including the rise of the Harappa culture to some stimulus from outside. Mr Ghosh successfully demonstrates that no Harappan trait can be detected in the urban cultures of the Ganga valley. He rightly questions the ascription of the earliest Kauśāmbī fortification to 1000 B.C. and the notion of its Harappan affinities; nor is in his view the Eran fortification earlier than 600 B.C. although both might belong to the pre-NBP period. He sees the continuity of the Chalcolithic culture at Gilund situated south of the Aravalli hills, but does not connect with it the origin of urbanism in northern India.

The importance of iron in making available a large amount of surplus foodgrains to feed people living in the towns is recognized and a whole chapter devoted to this metal. Mr Ghosh, however, tries to underplay its crucial role in inaugurating urban life in northern

<sup>\*</sup> A Review Article based on A. Ghosh, The City in Early Historical India (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1973), Pp. 98. Rs. 17.00.

India. Influenced by the sociological theory of Gideon Sjoberg and Mumford and an undue bias for politics in our traditional teaching of history, he thinks that political power compelled the people to contribute their surplus to the towns, which also received it through regular channels of trade. Admittedly, the state provided foodgrains for the urban population, but it owed its very being and accretion in political strength in the middle Ganga valley to the large-scale clearance of thick jungles through the use of the iron axe. The argument that the Egyptian pyramids were built of granite without the use of iron does not help, because with five inches of rainfall and sparse vegetation Egypt did not present the same problem of clearance as the Ganga basin. The author underlines the importance of burning the forests in clearance, as inferred from the story of Videgha Māthava in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. But even when the jungles are burnt the deep-rooted and hard-fibre sal, seasum, mahua, pipal and similar other trees flourishing in a rainfall of about 50 inches ( a reasonable guess for the pre-Iron Age in the middle Ganga valley) would have to be cut down by the iron axe. This practice obtains even now. In clearing the vegetation of eastern UP and Bihar stone or copper implements were bound to prove ineffective. Mr Ghosh argues in favour of the Ganga route in place of Kosambi's hypothesis regarding the Aryan advance along the Himalayan foothills. He ignores the fact that trees growing in higher altitudes under lower temperature have softer fibres and can be more easily cleared than those found in the middle Ganga basin. We know that the sandy loam as found in the Śrāvastī region can be easily broken for cultivation and does not allow the plants to strike deep roots. The upper Ganga route, which is not far away from the Himalayan foothills, may have been followed, but in the middle Ganga basin the earliest settlers seem to have expanded along the mountain foothills. Whether these people were Aryans or a mixed group cannot be said. The advance of the users of the Painted Grey Ware along the Himalayan foothills is suggested by the finds of this pottery at Rupar, Alamgirpur, Hastināpura, Allahpur, Ahicchatra, Śrāvastī, Piprahwa, Tilaurakot, etc. In spite of an intervening period between the two ceramic phases, at several sites in Panjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the upper Ganga-Yamuna doab the way for the settlement of the PGW people using iron was cleared by the Ochre Coloured Pottery people, who used copper tools associated with the Copper Hoards, but lived in wattle-and-daub houses. As the OCP deposits are generally not more than one metre thick, it seems that they set up shifting settlements based on hunting more than agriculture. The distribution map of the OCP2 coincides with the location of the PGW sites and OCP sherds have not been noticed in eastern UP or Bihar. It is therefore obvious that their users did not travel from east to west. Their copper implements may have been mostly made of the ores from Khetri in Rajasthan. Even when allowance is made for different categories of Copper Hoards and OCP, the fact remains that most OCP settlements are found in the terai of the Himalayas. Relatively less difficulties in clearance and comparatively greater dependence of earlier settlers on stone tools explain their proximity to the mountains.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Professor B. B. Lal tells me that there is archaeological basis to support Kosambi's hypothesis. <sup>2</sup> Purātatīva, no. 5 (1971-2). Fig. 1.

In discussing the role of iron Mr Ghosh maintains that no technology can flourish unless it is planted in a congenial social climate and technology cannot be used to produce the surplus which is not needed. One wonders whether archaeology can help us in identifying the motives behind the adoption of iron technology and the production of surplus, but once the new metal came in common use, Jainism and Buddhism, which appear to be the products of the Iron Age and NBP phase, created a receptive climate for the growth of urbanism. The setthis, who find an honourable place in the early Pali texts, helped the spread and growth of urban life.

We have no idea of the social climate of the first users of iron in the Ganga basin; anthropology might help us in this exercise. But the material climate does not seem to be unfavourable to the use of iron technology. The Chalcolithic people had a developed copper smithy, made wheel-turned pottery and produced rice. Although they mostly lived in the periphery of the middle Ganga basin, on account of the availability of stone they had also founded straggling settlements on the confluence of the rivers, as in the case of Chirand. The thick jungles of the Ganga basin certainly posed a challenge to human ingenuity, but the neighbouring areas provided iron with which the forests could be turned into arable lands and settlements. South Bihar possessed copper and iron ores of good quality in abundance and therefore proved a paradise for the iron users, who may have profited from the technology of the copper users.

Iron was not known to the people of Atranjikhera in the Painted Grey Ware phase earlier than 800 B.C., a date on which I am inclined to agree with Mr Ghosh, for too much cannot be built up on the basis of a single sample for carbon dating. The fact that iron objects found in the Gandhara graves are not earlier than 900 B.C. is significant and precludes their provenance in western UP earlier. In any case iron users do not appear in the middle Ganga basin earlier than the seventh century B.C. The rise of the Magadhan power is rightly ascribed to the availability of iron in south Bihar. The hypothesis can be extended by adding that by the middle of the sixth or possibly by the fifth century B.C. this region developed the iron metallurgy and produced mild steel on a large scale. To the lustrous surface of the NBP is attributed steel-like quality.1 Possibly the improved iron technology was reflected in the black colour of the slip, which was the result of a thin layer of black magnetic iron oxide produced through a particular firing process.2 The profuseness of the NBP sherds and the levels at which they have been discovered at Sonpur in Gaya show that Magadha was the epicentre of this pottery. Excavations at Campā in 1972-3 suggest that Anga or eastern Bihar was no less rich in this pottery. Although the number of iron implements discovered in Bihar does not compare favourably with that discovered at Atranjikhera, Noh and Ujjain, numerous slags indicate thriving iron metallurgy. Reference to tīkṣṇa ayas in Book II of the Arthasāstra of Kauṭilya, which is recognized to be its earliest stratum, suggests that steel making may have started earlier. The moist soil of Bihar led to the oxidization and the consequent corrosion and disintegration of iron objects.

<sup>1</sup> R. E. M. Wheeler, Early India and Pakistan (London, 1959), p. 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Expert opinions quoted in Purātattva, no. 5 (1971-2), pp. 62-3.

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Fifteen pieces of iron implements were discovered at Vaisali, mostly belonging to the fifth-fourth centuries B.C., but they could not be easily recognized.

Closely connected with the role of iron in producing the surplus is rapid specialization in arts and crafts in the age of the Buddha. The archaeological evidence for increased division of labour in the iron age sites of the middle Ganga basin is not impressive, but we do encounter the material remains of many crafts. The NBP phase was certainly marked by working in iron and silver mines, smithy in these metals, minting of copper and silver and bead making. Glass was manufactured at several places and people worked in ivory and various precious stones. The palisades of Pataliputra and references to wooden structures by Megasthenes show that carpentry was cultivated widely. Bricklaying started earlier, but once baking was introduced the manufacture of bricks and tiles must have engaged a good number of artisans; construction workers would also be considerable in number. Tanks and ring wells presuppose a good number of diggers and excavators, especially in the initial stage when these were dug for the first time. Above all, we can visualize varieties and plenty of potters engaged in making black-and-red ware, grey ware, PGW, Black Polished Ware, and different shades of NBP. According to an early Pali text, Saddalaputta of Vaisali (the chief potter) engaged 500 potters. The Dīgha Nikāya speaks of 28 crafts and, unlike the 18 guilds of craftsmen associated with Rajgir and other ancient cities in the Buddhist texts, this does not seem to be a conventional number. Even if we make allowance for the part-time and undifferentiated trades of some artisans, we are left with a large number of artisans whose products would need markets and who themselves would need food. Of course the king, his soldiers, administrators, etc., would require food; and so also the Buddhist and Jain monks who appeared in this period. The combined archaeological and literary evidence regarding towns clearly suggests that differentiation of occupations, especially of crafts, contributed to urbanization in the age of the Buddha.

What deserves more attention is the qualitative difference between the first urbanization and the second. Childe's model is based on the bronze age developments. Its application to the Indian situation is a useful exercise, but it does not carry us far enough. It may be premature to provide any model based on the Iron Age experience in India on account of regional variations, but we may do some groping towards it. Many Bronze Age cities are characterized by fortification and planning, which may not be considered to be the essential elements of urbanization in the Iron Age. The crux of the matter is the concentration at one place of a good number of people, not primarily engaged in agriculture but mainly occupied with crafts and commerce. The size of population in a town in a pre-industrial society would be certainly much less. Mounds extending at least over one square mile may indicate a sizable population. Large baked brick structures assume importance in the moist climate of the middle Ganga basin, but their absence in that area before the third century B.C. would not imply the absence of towns. Roads and streets, paved or otherwise, might indicate busy thoroughfares and drains might suggest sanitary arrangements for congested population. The abundance of ring wells and tanks provide signs of large habitation. Finds of coins might show trade and mint towns. Similarly, 1 larly, large furnaces, too many iron slags, iron smelters, etc., might indicate arrangements for making tools and implements in good numbers and supplying them to artisans and

agriculturists. Archaeologists may naturally look for these things when digging and wherever most of these characteristics are discovered, the site may be called urban.

We can bring out the important differences between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age urbanization. Of about 150 Harappan sites only five can be regarded as cities. On the other hand the number of towns is much larger in the Ganga basin and consequently their impact on society stronger. For the first time numerous settlements appear in the Ganga basin. Of these at least ten can be called urban sites. We may mention Campa, Rājagrha, Pāṭaliputra (though later), Vaisali, Varanasi, Kauśāmbī, Kuśīnagara, and Śrāvastī (later?), all of which are attested by both the early Pali texts and archaeology. In addition, we may take note of Chirand, Tilaurakot and Piprahwa. The impressive remains of the Harappan sites tend to overshadow the importance of urbanization in the Ganga basin, but the former have been preserved because the Harappan area was comparatively dry and rainless. Since the Aryans did not practise burial, since the climate of the middle Ganga basin was far more moist in earlier times and the area subjected to floods and since burnt bricks were not used till the third century B.C., the material remains could not survive till our times. The availability of timber made wooden structures common in Bihar, but they perished leaving pitiful remains, as at Kumrahar. Thereis, however, little doubt that the beginning of the historic period in Bihar and UP in the NBP phase saw enormous increase in population; this could not have been the case in the Harappan phase. Mr Ghosh shows that at Atranjikhera the NBP phase population practically doubled in comparison with that in the Painted Grey Ware phase. Since the PGW phase did not precede the NBP phase in the middle Ganga valley, such a comparison is obviated. But the archaeological complex of the NBP phase at both Chirand and Sonpur is much richer than the black-and-red Chalcolithic phase which preceded it.

On account of facilities for water supply for a large number of people living at one place the Bronze Age towns were founded on the river banks; this was also true of towns in the middle Ganga basin. But the use of iron tools and tiled rings (the latter from the third century B.C.) made possible the digging of wells and tanks and consequently made settlements possible away from the rivers. Strings of ring wells, belonging to the middle levels of the NBP phase, have been discovered at most urban sites of the period. The existence of tanks at Vaisali in the age of the Buddha is attested by both excavations and literary traditions. At Rajgir again water may have been supplied by wells or hot springs.

The vital difference lay in the use of tools and implements. Although a Bronze Age people, in sharp contrast with such cultures in Western Asia and Crete, the Harappans used bronze sparsely. Iron objects were used on a much larger scale in the Ganga basin sites than the bronze objects in the Harappan sites. Further, the Harappans subsisted on wheat, while people living in towns of the Ganga basin subsisted on rice. What is far more important is the fact that there is no evidence of coins being used by the Harappans in their commercial transactions; they may have possessed some common denominator for measuring value, but what it was we do not know. However, urbanization in the historic period is distinguished by the use of metallic money made of copper and silver, which gave a great impetus to trade and commerce. It may be argued that Bronze Age cities carried on trade without the use of metallic money, but this trade was limited to timber,

metals and some luxury ware. In any case it was found to be a trickle compared with the volume of trade carried on through the medium of coins. Easily portable metal coins made it easy to pay for services and goods obtained from different categories of people living in towns and villages and helped the accumulation of capital necessary for the growth of trade and industries. Merchants owning eighty koţis are commonly mentioned in the Jātakas. In the Iron Age coins became so indispensable to trade that in the Laws Plato forbade the use of gold and silver to the citizens but permitted the use of coins on the ground that it was inevitable for purposes of business

The complex of rice, iron and silver coins suggests that urbanism arose in Bihar and eastern UP. The first use of iron may have been diffused from the west towards the east, but the urban label given to Hastināpura has been rightly questioned by Mr Ghosh.

Finally, the Harappan phase gave a false start to urbanization, which did not last for more than 600 years and did not leave behind any lasting legacy. On the other hand the urbanization which was ushered in in the middle Ganga basin in the sixth century B.C. reached its peak in the first and second centuries A.D. and continued up to the sixth century. Even when towns declined and disappeared in post-Gupta times, the urban legacy was not as completely wiped out as that of the Harappans.

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### REVIEWS OF BOOKS

D. P. AGRAWAL, The Copper Bronze Age in India (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1971). Pp. xvi+270. Rs. 55.00.

Dr Agrawal's study is a welcome departure from the many descriptive accounts based on archaeological themes. It attempts to integrate the discovery of copper and bronze artefacts with a variety of scientific analyses which provide an added dimension of information such as is not available from archaeological excavation alone.

The study limits itself, as the title indicates, to the major Chalcolithic cultures of the sub-continent and discusses in particular detail the pre-Harappan cultures of the north-west, the Harappa culture, the post-Harappan cultures of the Ganga valley, central India and the northern Deccan—all of which were copper-bronze-using cultures. A fairly detailed and useful list of metal objects from various sites is given. (Strangely enough, however, the bun-shaped copper ingots of Lothal are omitted.)

The earliest copper industry of any significance is evident in the pre-Harappan cultures of Baluchistan. It would seem that the impetus came from West Asia where the tradition of Chalcolithic cultures predates the Indian. Possibly the search for ore deposits led to the eastward movement of the use of copper. As compared with the pre-Harappan cultures, there is a substantial increase in the use of copper during the period of the Harappa culture, which naturally makes this culture a major concern of the book. The importance of this development is enhanced by the author's view that metallurgy did not have an independent origin in the Harappa culture. Although the post-Harappan period saw a relative decline, areas in close contact with the Harappa culture, as for example, Saurastra and the Banas valley, maintain a healthy tradition in the utilization of copper.

The chapter on chronology sets in context the Carbon-14 dates for the Harappa culture, the earlier theories based on the presence of the Harappan artefacts at sites in Mesopotamia having been disposed of (although perhaps a little too summarily). Dr Agrawal is of the opinion that the decline of the city of Mohenjo-daro has to be dated in *circa* 2000 B.C. and the provincial regions may have declined later, i.e., 1800-1700 B.C. Whether or not this chronology is acceptable, one has to concede on the basis of other evidence as well that the area of the Harappa culture was not that of an empire but was "shifting spatially and temporally" and therefore suggests a series of similar but smaller political entities

The theories put forward by Raikes and Dales concerning the geological and hydrological changes which may have caused the decline of the major cities are questioned. Such a questioning may well be in order to the extent that further work of a hydrological nature needs to be carried out before the issue can be clinched. However, no alternative theory has as yet been put forward with any conviction to explain not merely the physical decline of the major cities, but, more important, to explain the evidently substantial ecological change in the lower Indus valley which might account for the total break as it would seem, of advanced cultures in the region.

The section on chemical analyses and metal forging techniques is the core of the metallurgical aspects of the study. The author is rightly critical of the earlier approach

attempting to define the provenance of a metal from an individual component content. Thus the Sumerian Committee concerned with the analysis of copper and bronze artefacts from Sumer used the presence of nickel and/or arsenic as a classificatory factor. A comparison of the nickel and arsenic content of copper as indicated by the reports of the Sumerian Committee and the analysis of Harappan artefacts by Sanahullah (in Marshall's volumes on Mohenjo-daro) could suggest a similarity in the copper ores used by both the Harappans and the Sumerians. This in turn would have a bearing on the identification of place-names associated with the supply of copper to Sumer. Chemical analyses suggest that the Harappans may have tapped the Khetri ores (Jaipur district). Arsenic, lead and tin for alloying would also have been available from deposits in Rajasthan. Scarcity of tin, however, probably accounts for the comparatively small use of bronze. Dr Agrawal argues convincingly for the adoption of the more recent method of metal analysis where the emphasis is on the study of total impurity patterns rather than a single component. Such an analysis could with some facility be extended to the Sumerian and Harappan copper artefacts, given that a preliminary investigation has already been made, and may considerably clarify existing views on the nature of the contacts between the two civiliza-

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The chemical analysis of copper objects from Indian sites points to some interesting facts. Harappan technology used arsenic, tin and lead alloys, the Banas culture used only lead and the Malwa and Jorwe cultures lead and tin. The Doab Copper Hoard objects were made without alloying. This would suggest, as the author points out, a falling off of technological standard in the post-Harappan period and a distinct difference in technology between the Harappan and the Copper Hoard cultures.

The discussion on the Copper Hoards of the Ganga-Yamuna doab reads less convincingly than other parts of the book. Admittedly, the major problem here is that these objects have not been found from stratified deposits and technologically they are distinctive to the doab. The association of the Copper Hoards with the Ochre Colour Pottery, a rare occurrence, appears to the reviewer uncalled for. The typology and technology of the Ochre Colour Pottery do not suggest a Chalcolithic culture and Dr Agrawal rightly does not lay much emphasis on this association. However, the technology of the Copper Hoard objects does suggest a more advanced socio-economic base than that of a seminomadic tribal society, as asserted by the author. Even if the makers of these artefacts were itinerant smiths, it is unlikely that they were servicing semi-nomadic tribal groups. An absence of pots and pans is not a sufficient criterion to postulate the absence of a more settled agrarian society with some degree of surplus. The Copper Hoard culture remains an enigma to archaeologists and should perhaps be more carefully studied in the context of technological development and the social base.

The section on ecology raises the relevant question of its relation with technology. Dr Agrawal is of the view that the extensive settlement of the Ganga valley had to await forests and ploughing heavy alluvial soil. The argument could have been further developed by some indication of the inter-relationship of technology, ecology and settlement

patterns. It is a little surprising that the author does not sufficiently analyse the interrelationship when discussing Harappan agriculture. Assuming correctly that the Indus plain did not require iron ploughshares, he, however, concludes that copper hoes and chert blades mounted on sticks would be adequate to plough these plains, a view which suggests a lack of familiarity with the technology of the plough. Furthermore, such an argument ignores not only the evidence of the furrowed field from pre-Harrapan levels at Kalibangan (which furrows are clearly not the result of either hoes or chert blades mounted on sticks), but also the fact that the surplus required to fill the granaries of the Harappan cities would inevitably have been based on plough agriculture of a more advanced type than that suggested by the author.

The book suffers from two small faults. One relates to the organization of the material. The sections on dating methods used by modern scientific archaeology, the origin and diffusion of metallurgy and part of the discussion on metal forging and detection appear to intrude on and hinder the exposition of the main theme, which could be better put across if these found a place in appendices. After all, most archaeologists today are familiar with these techniques and would not require to have the actual methods explained to them in the course of the discussion; of greater concern to them is the use made of these techniques, the results of the investigation and the light these results throw on archaeological reconstruction. The description of the techniques could as easily be read in an appendix by those less familiar with them. Fortunately, the book does not read like a highly technical manual and is quite comprehensible even to those unfamiliar with the problems of metallurgy in the service of archaeology.

The quality of the maps leaves much to the desired. They tend to be cluttered and at times almost illegible. The purpose of a map, one assumes, is twofold: to indicate the exact location of a place mentioned in the text—some important places mentioned in the text are not located in the maps—and to tabulate and project certain facts which can only

be done effectively if the map is clear and uncluttered.

These weaknesses do not, however, detract from the essential worth of the book which introduces a rigorous and analytical approach to the subject, an approach which could well be emulated by other archaeologists working in similar fields in Indian archaeology. It also indicates the growing significance of utilizing scientific methods to process archaeological data and discover new dimensions to the study of such data.

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ROMILA THAPAR

S. R. RAO, Lothal and the Indus Civilization (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1973). Pp. xx+215. Rs. 120.00.

Lothal in the Ahmedabad district of Gujarat has been the scene of a major excavation conducted during the successive winter months of 1955-60 on behalf of the Archaeological Survey of India with Mr Rao as its director. The operation at this truly Harappan sit

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in the Indian part of the sub-continent naturally attracted a good deal of notice and with subsequent excavation at Kalibangan in Rajasthan considerably advanced our knowledge of the extent and content of the Indus civilization. The author's first-hand knowledge of the nature of "Indus" intrusion in Gujarat through his earlier explorations at Rangpur and other sites in 1962-3 (Ancient India, xviii-xix, 4-217), eminently fitted him for the task and, as the title suggests, the book under review seeks to evaluate the contribution and impact of Lothal in the totality of the Indus civilization. Normally a volume of this kind should have followed and not preceded the publication of the full report of the excavation at Lothal. That this is not so is no reflection on the author, for he is known to have prepared and submitted the full report for publication. Apprehending delay in that the author has shared his intimate knowledge of the findings with others through this volume. Unfortunately, it abounds in speculative interpretations with too little supporting evidence, making the publication of the complete report with illustrations an urgent necessity.

The author treads on familiar ground in the first four chapters (pp. 1-49) of the book. He, however, provides a useful résumé of recent investigations of Harappan and proto-Harappan settlements in Haryana and Gujarat, for further intensive work is likely to be concentrated in these regions to determine the changes that characterized the Harappa culture in the outlying areas. This non-Lothal part of the book contains a suggestion that the far-flung areas of the Harappa culture were part of a well-knit "Indus Empire", a map of which showing different provinces appears on page 3. The hypothesis is based on the apparent homogeneity of crafts and standardization of weights and measures over a vast area and the consequent possibility of a central authority to regulate, control and supervise these. But the assumption that political authority alone is capable of handling the above functions is debatable. Anyone conversant with the working of guilds in ancient India knows that their business transactions were firmly regulated from generation to generation. The homogeneity of crafts over a wide region during Harappan times could be ascribed to a system not very different from the later-day guilds. Maybe, different crafts were in the hands of communities whose members moved from place to place ensuring uniformity without the need for a central political authority. In any case, as pointed out by Raymond and Bridget Allchin in 1968 (The Birth of Indian Civilization, p. 129), any substantive proof for the existence of an empire is wanting. If the author regards political consciousness as an intrinsic element in civilization in this sense (p. 4), presumably he is not moving on sure ground.

Chapter V deals with finds from excavations at Lothal. While giving details of the Period A—the earliest at Lothal—it is suggested that there existed a pre-Harappan settlement of "Micaceous Red Ware-using people" and that the Harappans arrived at the scene later. The author admits that a purely Micaceous Red Ware level unassociated with Harappan products has not been reached. The surmise of an earlier pre-Harappan settlement is based on "utter scarcity of Harappan pottery and exuberance of the Micaceous Red Ware in a 3 metre-thick occupation debris below the present water-table" (p 54). If these assertions create the impression that there might be untapped levels below the present digging and belonging to a pre-Harappan culture, a reference to the interim

report on the last season's work in the *Indian Archaeology*—A Review, 1961-2, p. 9, will correct it, for it is clearly stated there that natural soil was reached and that no pre-Harappan level could be detected. Incidentally, digging below the water-table is not mentioned in the 1961-2 report, but noted for the first time in this book. The implied suggestion of a pre-Harappan settlement is thus not based on incontrovertible facts.

Mr Rao attests the existence of an acropolis and a corresponding lower town, both enclosed within a single walled complex. The notes appearing in the successive issues of Indian Archaeology—A Review had indicated that town-planning at Lothal was materially different from that at Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and Kalibangan. Unlike at Lothal, the citadel area at other sites is invariably distinct from the town proper and each can be identified in a separate mound. In order to be meaningful, the acropolis-lower town distinction must imply that buildings on the acropolis were raised on a sufficiently higher level than those in town proper. This was possible either by artificially raising the ground level as at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa or selecting a naturally raised hillock as at Fatehpur-Sikri. At Lothal, however, if the Blocks B, C and D representing the so-called acropolis area were built on a raised platform, so were the remaining Blocks A, E, F and G representing the lower town. The existence of an acropolis or citadel at Lothal in the manner of other urban centres of the Indus civilization cannot therefore be deduced from the available evidence. The author has claimed to identify an "impressive" structure in the so-called acropolis area as the residence of the ruler who, in the words of Mr Rao was required to "supervise the transactions of the ware-house on the one hand and the movement of the ships in the dockyard on the other" (p. 56). Surely he must have been an over-worked ruler if he performed these arduous functions besides his other administrative duties. The proposed identification of the structure must in the circumstances remain highly conjectural.

Perhaps no other structure at Lothal has attracted so much attention as the supposed dockyard which has given the site the distinction of being a port town. In spite of its staunch advocates, the hypothesis has not found an easy acceptance among scholars. Doubts arose almost immediately after the suggestion was mooted. Thus early in 1960 U. P. Shah questioned its validity and maintained that the basin-structure might have been a tank for the storage of drinking water ("Lothal-A Port?", Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda, ix, 310-20), which is so scarce even today. The strongest repudiation of the notion came from S. Lawrence Leshnik in a lengthy article to which a short note was appended by K. H. Junghans ("The Harappan 'Port': Another View", American Anthropologist, 1xx, 1968, 911-22). Leshnik subscribed to Shah's view of the basin-like structure at Lothal being a tank for the storage of drinking water. Alternatively, he postulated this to be a tank for irrigation purposes, a practice widely prevalent in western India in historical times (R. S. Sharma, Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, Bombay, 1966, p. 95). Mr Rao, however, sticks to his earlier thesis of the structure being a Harappan dockyard ("Shipping and Maritime Trade of the Indus People", Expedition, vii, pt. iii, 1965, 30-7; "Excavation at Rangpur and Other Explorations in Gujarat", Ancient India, xviii-xix, 1962-3, 4-217) and thinks that "the baked bricks were too precious to be used for any other purpose than the construction of the dock which played a more vital role in the

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economy of Lothal than the tank did" (p. 72). It needs to be realized that a port with a dockyard is far more than a mere baked-brick construction. A legitimate question can be asked as to what particular necessity impelled the Harappans at Lothal to undertake the construction of a dockyard with all its implicit organization and above all the assurance of a continuous supply of merchandise to make it economically viable. As rightly pointed out by Leshnik, there is not much evidence for an extensive or regular overseas trade carried on by the Harappans. The dockyard hypothesis, therefore, has yet to be firmly established.

It is not easy to reconcile the author's view that the Harappan society was "neither caste-ridden nor class-ridden" (p. 111) with his observation that the society consisted of rich merchants and poor craftsmen, besides the ruling class (Ibid). If it were so, could there be a better example of a class-ridden society? Additionally, it will imply a degree of exploitation resulting in the poverty of the craftsmen and affluence of the merchants.

The chapter on Religion (pp. 135-43) is much too speculative. In any case the contribution of Lothal to the assortment of the supposed "Indus" beliefs and cults is confined to the prevalence of fire-worship. The author attaches somewhat exaggerated significance to T. N. Ramachandran's view (Presidential Address, Section I, Ancient India, Indian History Congress, 1956) that the Indus seals depict Vedic cult scenes (pp. 137-9). He finds it easy to move from this position to arguing that the pre-Vedic Aryans constituted a section of the Harappan population (p. 160). The Harappan-pre-Vedic Aryan-Rgvedic Aryan tangle is too involved to be settled this way. Presumably it is hazardous to draw far too definitive conclusions regarding religious beliefs and cults on the basis of archaeological data in the absence of corroborative textual evidence. This is amply borne out by Peter J. Ucko's elaborate recent study of the figurines from neolithic Crete and pre-dynastic Egypt (Anthropomorphic Figurines, London, 1968), which shows that female figurines, whose mother-goddess identification has all along been taken for granted, may not have any cult significance at all.

No comments need be made on the short chapter on the Indus script (pp. 127-34), a subject being intensely debated at the moment. It remains to be seen how far the author's claim to decipherment of this script finds acceptance among scholars. The chronology of Lothal has been cogently argued. A few snags, however, remain. Notwithstanding changes in the later phase, the fact remains that the date-bracket of 2450-1600 B.C. represents too long a span of time for a culture to have continued uninterrupted. The Harappan element being present from the earliest occupation of the site, it is unlikely that the "Indus" intrusion in southern Gujarat took place in or about 2400 B.C., the date customarily assigned to the rise of the cities in the Indus valley. Those scholars, therefore, who argue for a date somewhere around 2200 B.C. for the beginning of settlement at Lothal may not be far off the mark. In the chapter on the origins (pp. 168-76) the author has convincingly refuted the often-repeated suggestion that Mesopotamia had a direct or indirect hand in the birth of Indus civilization

In so far as the book highlights the results of one of the most significant excavations of the post-independence period, the publication is of unquestionable value. The printing has been competently done and there are very few typographical errors. The same cannot

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be said of the illustrations. The only section-drawing on page 64 has been indifferently reproduced. Considering the cost of the publication, the reader would expect much better photographic illustrations than those given at the end of the book.

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K.K. SINHA

O. MANCHANDA, A Study of the Harappan Pottery (Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1972). Pp. xii + 406. Rs. 55.00.

Ever since its first recognition in 1921 the Indus civilization has continued to arouse much interest and speculation among scholars. During the first two decades of its discovery its form and content were fully established through large-scale excavations and intensive surface explorations. But although Sir Aurel Stein's work in Baluchistan and that of N. C. Majumdar in Sind had indicated the existence of certain ill-sorted antecedent cultures, as late as 1946 when Sir Mortimer Wheeler resumed excavation at Harappa the Indus civilization was thought to be devoid alike of genesis and decay and had remained essentially an abstraction. During the past two decades, therefore, serious attention has been drawn towards discovering (i) the beginning of this civilization and (ii) the circumstances leading to its decline. In the context of these investigations the present book is a welcome addition to the accumulating literature on the Indus civilization. The book has been written with the avowed purpose of "undertaking the integrated study of the Harappan pottery as such in all its ramification". This involves an enquiry into the inter-relationship of the different geographical areas of this civilization in its formative stage and an assessment of the reaction of antecedent cultures to its emergence. The author, however, does not acquit herself satisfactorily in this task.

The arrangement of the four chapters, dealing respectively with Harappan pottery, pre-Harappan cultures, trekking back to Baluchistan and Harappan painted designs does not seem to be logical with the result that it is not possible to follow any evolutionary process either in form or in design of the Harappan pottery. The lack of uniformity in the nomenclature of Harappan pottery and the absence of any defined basis for the arrangement of its forms are striking. Thus some of the forms included under pedestal-based jars have no pedestals; the same is true of ledge-necked jars or S-shaped goblets. Expressions such as vase-like jars or vase-like vessels are clumsy and ambiguous beyond measure. Many of the forms are shown to have parallels in the Late and post-Harappan cultures. A separate discussion of this phenomenon might have enabled the author to ascertain whether a Harappan phase merged organically into a successor industry or culture. Some shapes which are not Harappan at all have been included in the discussion without much relevance. The suggested use of the tall dishes-on-stand as ceremonial fire-pans is not convincing, for none of the dishes of these stands bears any burning marks attesting such a usage. Similarly, the explanation for the use of red painting on similar stands from Mohenjo-daro as being in "deference to some neolithic trait"

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is without any tangible evidence. The suggested relationship of the knobbed ware with the technique of applique work available on the pottery from Ahar and Navdatoli is far-fetched. The impression sought to be created that most of the Harappan forms have their counterparts either on sites in Iraq or are inspired by them is far from the truth, for, as affirmed by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, "the Harappan pottery helps rather to isolate the Indus Civilization than to link it up with other Cultures". Similarities in shapes have been found from the Hassuna period onwards to the Isin-Larsa, often without regard to the associated culture traits or to the mechanism of the diffusion of the concerned cultures.

A case seems to have been made in this book that certain Harappan pottery forms penetrated into pre-Harappan cultures. While it is to be conceded that some of the "pre-Harappan" sites had retained their vernacular cultures for an appreciable length of time after the main Indus cities like Mohenjo-daro and Harappa had been established, the question of inter-relationship of these cultures requires close investigation as also its scale and nature. It still remains to be determined whether at the time when Indus civilization had sprung into full shape its dominant elements were picked up by the existing civilized or literate societies or the less important ones such as the pottery forms. As regards the comparative study of certain painted motifs, there are many pitfalls in studying a single element without considering the different complexes of which it may be a part. For a fruitful comparison both graphic and plastic media should be taken into consideration in addition to the technique of painting, including the colour scheme of the pigment at the surface. The assertion that "Kalibangan hardly deserves the designation of pre-Harappan; it can at best be proto-Harappan, deriving inspiration from many diverse sources" is wrong. The term "proto-Harappan" can only be given to a recognizable stage of culture which shows an evolutionary process (from larval through adolescence to maturity) towards the Harappan. At Kalibangan such a process is not seen.

The note appended by the General Editor on the Dichotomy of Harappan and Pre-Harappan Cultures (pp. 395-405) takes into consideration the available evidence, including pottery shapes from Siswal and Lal Qila. Some sort of a rational shape has been proposed for this heterogeneous material but the evidence in the present stage of our knowledge is not definitive. It has been stated that the mature Harappa culture, although a single unified culture, is divided into two phases: (a) 2400-2150 B.C. and (b) 2150-1700 B.C. In the former phase the relationship of the Harappan culture with the pre-Harappan culture is claimed to be "mutual, casual and restricted to a few elements and concepts". This contention, however, does not explain the occupation by the Harappans of Kot Diji and Kalibangan following an abandonment of these sites by the settlers of the preceding culture. The question is whether during the period 2400-2150 B.C. the civilization had reached maturity and patented its culture traits, and, if so, why the relationship with contemporary cultures remained only casual and restricted.

The book which claims to attempt a comparative study of the material from different regions contains no maps showing the location of the sites and no chronological and correlation charts of the various cultures discussed therein with the result that the reader finds it difficult to comprehend the inter-communication of the various sites

and to understand the precise relationship of the Indus civilization with the preceding and succeeding cultures. The lines on the pottery are very badly drawn; sometimes even the scale is not indicated. The lay-out of the book has not received the attention it deserved. From the General Editor's note it is learnt that the book is the second monograph in THREE A (i.e., Art, Archaeology and Anthropology) series. While we welcome the series, we do hope that the other books planned for it will bring better credit to the author, editor and publishers.

Archaeological Survey of India New Delhi

B. K. THAPAR

H. D. SANKALIA, Some Aspects of Prehistoric Technology in India (Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi, 1970). Pp. vi + 70; 16 Figs. Rs. 10.00.

Technological developments underlie human progress through the course of history. Beginning with the tools of wood, bone and stone and discovery and control of fire, mankind developed agricultural implements, artificial methods of irrigation, use of animal power, wheeled vehicles and sailing boats, knowledge of the property of clay to make earthen pots, quarrying, mining and smelting, large-scale use of baked bricks, art of glazing, building of arches, etc., before it evolved iron technology. This lucidly written, properly illustrated and reasonably priced monograph by Professor Sankalia provides for the first time a clear and concise survey of prehistoric technology in India up to the advent of the Iron Age in c. 500 B.C.

The eminent archaeologist who has brought to light and assiduously studied a large number of Stone Age industries describes the various methods of flaking and fashioning stone tools in the first part. He emphasizes the similarity in the Stone Age techniques in India and other parts of the old world and suggests that though not coeval in age, these developed in the same chronological order. We wish he had paid equal heed to bringing to light the niceties and differences in the material and technique of the Indian Stone Age industries vis-à-vis old world technology. In any case one gets a fuller account of Stone Age industries in his earlier book, Stone Age Tools: Their Techniques and Probable Functions (Poona, 1964).

The second part deals in some detail with ceramic and metal technology during c. 3000-500 B.C. The art of making terracottas, sculptures, beads and stone vessels is discussed. Curiously, although glass technology developed during the Painted Grey Ware period it has been left out.

The development of copper-bronze technology is reviewed in chronological order. Important metallurgical operations, sources of copper, tin, etc., techniques of casting and fabrication and nature of copper-base alloys have been described with special reference to the Harappa and Chalcolithic cultures. It is maintained that despite their advance in metal technology the Harappans did not adopt the socketed axes and swords with

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mid-ribs from west Sumer, where these existed much earlier. The metal technology of the Copper Hoards does not receive adequate attention; the same is true of some of the innovations in building technology, sanitation methods, lay-out of the cities, use of purified variety of asphalt, large-scale use of baked bricks, glazed pottery and steined wells during the Harappa period.

The present study has brought to light the gaps in our knowledge and marked out the areas for future research. Technology played a very important role during the period under review and ushered in two urbanizations in India, the first during the Harappa period and the second during the Iron Age. Professor Sankalia has rightly pointed out the need for an extensive study of copper-bronze and iron technology in prehistoric India. Being seriously handicapped by the absence of written records for the reconstruction of the history of technology, we have to solely depend upon the scientific and technical investigations of the artefacts brought to light by the archaeological excavations. A great deal of spadework in the form of scientific examination would have to be done if a reliable and comprehensive history of technology is to be written. Professor Sankalia hopes that with the co-operation of the national laboratories and the Indian National Science Academy this should not be difficult. At the present state of affairs the monograph cannot be expected to give an exhaustive information on the subject, as is being sought by the historians of science and technology.

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H. C. BHARDWAJ

AJAY MITRA SHASTRI (ed), Coinage of the Sātavāhanas and Coins from Excavations (Nagpur University, 1972). Pp. xxx + 142. Rs. 40.00.

The progress of numismatic study in India has been closely connected with the Numismatic Society of India. On the occasion of the two annual conferences of the Society held at Varanasi in 1965 and 1966 the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University, organized seminars respectively on Chronology of Punch-marked Coins and Local Coins of Northern India. The lead was followed by the University of Lucknow which in 1967 organized a seminar on Coins of Early Medieval India. The Nagpur University deserves our thanks for offering in print the papers read at the two seminars it organized when it played host to the 59th annual conference of the Society.

The proceedings contain the address delivered by Professor T. V. Mahalingam as the president of the annual session. He has made a survey of the work done so far in the field of south Indian numismatics. In pleading for a planned effort to study the subject he has directed attention to some of the important problems that require a careful study by scholars. Though the address is scholarly and useful, it has no direct relevance to the themes of either of the two seminars and could have been allowed to appear in the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.

The success of a seminar depends on the planning done by its organizers and the co-operation extended by the participants. Often, in spite of the best efforts of the organizers, it is not possible to cover all the possible aspects of the subject in a seminar. If, instead of two different themes for the two days of the seminar, the host university had only one theme, possibly the results would have been better. But, as it is, several important problems concerning the first topic have not been touched at all. Likewise, the papers for the second subject do not seem to present a planned treatment; they are in the form of a patchwork and leave several gaps.

Any report of a seminar should normally contain the discussions which are its main justification and hence its most useful contribution. They help interested students and scholars consolidate the existing fund of knowledge and thus gain some direction for their future studies. In the present volume the editor, through his very brief comments, has corrected some of the gross mistakes besides providing cross-references. In his Introduction he has further tried to bring out the main contributions of the various papers.

In any case we are not to judge the present work by what it could not have. A comparison with earlier works on Sātavāhana coinage will clearly prove its usefulness for the new material it includes, especially coin-types not noticed earlier. The papers of Nisar Ahmad, K. D. Bajpai and P. L. Gupta are useful in this respect. Nisar Ahmad discusses the attribution of coins mostly on typological grounds and prepares a list of cointypes of the different kings. The new coins discussed by K. D. Bajpai include the punchmarked copper coin of Sātakarņi I and the Lakṣmī type cast copper coin of Sāta, which are of great significance for the history of Sātavāhana coins. P.L. Gupta studies the regional distribution of the coins and attempts a classification into types and varieties.

I. K. Sarma covers such a wide range of problems that he has been able to accomplish only a survey. It would have been better if the contributors had concentrated on limited problems and discussed the various possibilities arising out of the available material. S. Gokhale, A. N. Lahiri and P. R. K. Prasad minutely analyse the relevant evidence for particular problems of a well-defined, though narrow, scope. S. Gokhale analyses the symbols on the Sātavāhana coins for determining the details of social and religious life. The implications of these coins for the economic history of the period should also have been worked out in a separate paper. A. N. Lahiri traces the origin of the elephant and tree-in-railing of the Satavahana coins to the 12 ratta punch-marked coins with four symbols from the Singavaram hoard and shows how the choice of metals and types by subsequent dynasties has been influenced by Sātavāhana examples. P. R. K. Prasad studies the silver portrait coins. The portrait series, according to him, was initiated by Gautamīputra Sātakarņi. He holds the legends on the reverse of these coins to be in the Telugu script and in the Ragada, which is a desī metre. As the earliest recorded Telugu sentence, this will prove the Andhra origin of the Sātavāhanas. There could have been several other meaningful papers studying the symbols, types, palaeography and metrology of the coins.

The bearing of the evidence of excavations has been very usefully analysed by P. L. Gupta, but to suit the planning of the two seminars his paper has been published along with those for the second one. The problem of the epoch of the Sātavāhana rule, of

vital importance for any study concerning the Sātavāhanas, has been discussed by A. M. Shastri who raises some new considerations, including numismatic, for a date about the middle of the first century B.C.

For the second seminar the two main papers are those of Bela Lahiri and P. L. Gupta who discuss the bearing of excavations respectively on the tribal and local coins of northern India and the Sātavāhana coins. The conclusions of Bela Lahiri generally agree with the views expressed earlier by Allan. P. L. Gupta, however, derives new inferences about the history and chronology of the Sātavāhanas and is able to suggest improvements upon the chronological limits for periods IV and V proposed by the excavators. M. D. N. Sahi coins from the Rupar excavations. K. D. Bajpai discusses the bearing of recent excavations on problems concerning Gupta coins.

The gaps in the coverage of the second seminar are apparent enough. Whereas earlier excavations did not attach much importance to stratigraphy, the full reports on some of the recent excavations are not available. The excavators are naturally more interested in the numismatic evidence for the earlier period, for which they find it dependable, especially in view of the paucity of other relevant evidence. For later periods the problems of historical reconstruction do not require such assistance from numismatic data. But even in the latter case coins have their own historical usefulness which necessitates greater attention.

On the whole it is a useful volume and will be consulted with profit by students and researchers. The printing is neat and the plates are clear. Considering the rising costs of book-production, the price of the book will appear to be not unreasonable, but, I am afraid, it denies several readers the pleasure of having a copy in their personal library. This, however, is the case with many books that are coming out in the field of Indology.

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LALLANJI GOPAL

M. K. SHARAN, Tribal Coins—A Study (Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. 358. Rs. 50.00.

It is heartening to see that ancient Indian numismatics has recently attracted the attention of a number of scholars and several monographs on early indigenous coins have appeared during the last few years. The present study by Dr Sharan embodying his Ph.D. thesis approved by the Magadh University in 1969 is a welcome addition to these. The author has given a historical survey of early Indian coinage in the first chapter (pp. 19-64). The coins of the Yaudheyas, the Mālavas, the Audumbaras and the Kunindas are examined in the following four chapters (pp. 65-313). The conclusion (pp. 314-7) briefly surveys sketch-maps and plates of coins add to the usefulness of the study.

The author claims to have exerted himself fully to make his study "more authentic" and "a compact impartial document executed after a thorough research and contemplation, in a judicial spirit" (p. 18). In his foreword to the book Professor Upendra Thakur credits him with "critical and scientific...approach to the various problems connected with his work..." (p. 5). Unfortunately, the monograph ignores substantial new material on the subject and is not up-to-date. One comes across some outdated views of the late Professor D. R. Bhandarkar and a few other early numismatists in the first chapter. Thus it is wrongly suggested that gopuccha stands for a coin (p. 21), that five denominations of gold coins were known in the Vedic period (pp. 22, 28) and that the negamā coins "are of course of a much later date (?)" (p. 25). The author shows lack of restraint and decency in his criticism of P. L. Gupta's view of the migratory character of the tribal republics of Panjab (p. 78).

There are other defects as well. The Yaudheya coins have not been adequately classified. These coins fall under three main categories: 1. Early (yaudheyānām bahudhānake), 2. Middle (Kārttikeya and Devī or Śiva type) and 3. Late (Kārttikeya and goddess type, with three varieties). On the basis of Allan's attribution (p. 266 of his Catalogue) the author takes the coins with the legend mahārājasa to be the Yaudheya coins (p. 102). In fact, these coins are of the Kauśāmbī janapada and they have nothing to do with the Yaudheyas. Nor are the coins with the legend mitasa Yaudheya or Kanauj coins, as supposed by the author (p. 107). Quite a large number of the early Yaudheya coins are now known, but in none of these can the legend yaudheyakānām bahudhānakanam be read, as suggested by the author (p. 109). The peculiarities found on a number of the Yaudheya coins of class III (Kārttikeya and Devī type) should have been discussed, but this has not been attempted. The triangular-headed symbol (p. 141) is well known as indradhvaja (Indra's banner). It is different from a yūpa (sacrificial post). Śiva's triśūla (trident) cannot be said to have originated from Buddhist triratna (three jewels).

As regards the Mālava coins, there is no doubt that some scholars attribute the coins from Rajasthan with the peculiar Brāhmī legends bhapamyana, majupa, magajaša, etc., to the Mālava chiefs. But why such outlandish names were given to the Mālavas, who were indigenous through and through, is hard to explain. The author goes so far as to suggest that the coins of the second century B. C. from Ujjain and Vidišā bearing non-Indian names can also be the issues of the Mālavas (p. 184). There is no evidence to show that the Mālavas were masters of the Avanti-Ākara region as early as the second century B.C.

The chapter on the Audumbaras opens with an unusually long extract from the Kālikāpurāṇa (pp. 215-6). Instead of giving this extract in Roman with numerous mistakes it would have been better to give only the relevant ślokas in Devanagari script. As regards the male figure on the silver coins of Dharaghoṣa, its identification as Śiva cannot be ruled out.

It is wrong to suppose that some of the symbols on the Kuninda coins can be called Buddhist (p. 308). The Kunindas showed no leanings towards Buddhism, which had not made any significant advance in the region occupied by them.

Precision is no merit of the author's style which is loose and involved. Care should have been taken to give correct spellings of names and correct quotations from original

texts. Instances of incorrect use of diacritical marks are numerous. As to the plates, nos. III, IV and V showing "trident-grooves" seem to be redundant in such a specialized study. The arrangement of coins in some of the plates is not in order and illustrations are topsyturvy (see for example, plate I, line 1, figure 3, line 2, figure 5, lines 3, 4 and 5; plate II, line 4, figure 2; plate VII, line 2, last coin; plate IX, line 1, last coin and all the coins in the second line). The author could have avoided this by setting the plates properly. Coins in various plates should also have been properly numbered.

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K. D. BAJPAI

K. K. THAPALYAL, Studies in Ancient Indian Seals (Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, Lucknow, 1972). Pp. xix + 437; 36 Plates. Rs. 100.00.

Seals and sealings, which closely resemble coins in form and nature though not in purpose and use, are of inestimable value for the study of ancient Indian history in its various aspects. But for them our knowledge of Indian history would have been poorer than what it is. However, there was so far not a single work incorporating the study of a large number of seals and sealings in a scientific manner. The present work, therefore, fulfils a long-felt desideratum and affords important source material for historical studies.

For the present monograph, which substantially represents the author's dissertation on which the University of Lucknow awarded him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1966, Dr Thapalyal has taken up seals and sealings of the Indian sub-continent roughly north of Nagpur dating from circa third century B.C. to mid-seventh century A.D. The work comprises eight chapters and four appendices besides an exhaustive bibliography (pp. 351-74) and an index (pp. 375-417). Matters of general interest such as materials used for making seal-dies, their shapes and sizes and the technique of manufacturing them, characteristic features of seals and sealings including linguistic and palaeographical peculiarities of their legends and the devices found on them, and the use and method of application of seals are dwelt upon in the opening chapter (pp. 1-18). The second chapter deals with the seals of the tribal republics and monarchical states dating from circa second century B.C. to the period of the Puspabhūtis of Sthānvīśvara and the Bhauma-Narakas of Assam in the seventh century A.D. While only two tribal states, Mālava and Yaudheya, find representation in seals, the monarchical states so represented are much more numerous. Notice has been taken not only of the seals used independently but also of metallic sealimpressions attached to copperplate charters for authenticating them. This chapter offers much precious material for the reconstruction of the political history of ancient India. The evidence furnished by the seals and sealings on polity and civil and military administration forms the theme of the following chapter which discusses, inter alia, regal titles, official designations and administrative divisions. Chapter IV, which is the largest in size and claims nearly a quarter of the entire work (pp. 136-222), dilates glyptic data appertaining religious myths and legends, beliefs and customs and iconic depictions of various divinities and devices of a religious nature. Jainism, one of the major Indian religions, is entirely unrepresented here whereas no doubt is left about the wide diffusion of and great popularity enjoyed by Paurāṇic Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism, thereby confirming a fact already well-known from other sources. As for Hinduism, Saivism and Vaisnavism claim a much larger number of seals than those relating to comparatively minor divinities such as Brahmā, Kārttikeya, Gaņeśa, Durgā, Lakṣmī, etc. The Buddhist seals give us names of several monasteries or contain such well-known religious formulae as ye dharmā hetu-prabhavā hetum teṣām tathāgatah prāha, etc., often in association with some typically Buddhistic devices. The seals of the nigamas and śrenīs which played a vital role in the economic life of ancient India are dealt with in the next chapter (pp. 222-47). Although literary works supply a good deal of material regarding the system of education prevailing in ancient India, the information gathered in chapter VI from seals referring to caranas, agrahāras, the communities of scholars well-versed in three (traividyās) or four Vedas (caturvidyās), pariṣads, temples and Buddhist monasteries substantially adds to our knowledge of the educational organization. The next chapter attempts an artistic appraisal of seals some of which are masterpieces of art representations and an analysis of art motifs depicted on glyptics. The concluding chapter is an attempt to assess the socio-religious and political bearing of personal names found on seals and sealings. Names of shrines, monasteries and administrative divisions known from seals are alphabetically listed in Appendix A while the next two appendices deal with non-sectarian mottos and coindevices occurring on seals. The clay-lumps bearing Indo-Greek coin-devices are taken to suggest "trade contacts between India and the West" and those with Gupta coin devices are believed to have been tokens issued by the Imperial Guptas to acquaint the people with their "prowess as well as their artistic taste and talents". The clay-lumps bearing early indigenous coin-devices and exact parallels of coins are presumed to have been issued by the minting authorities providing "bona fides of the person possessing them or else were results of mint-masters' testing of the coin-dies on clay-lumps which somehow escaped destruction", or served as coins (pp. 335-6). Literary references to the seals are studied in Appendix D. The bibliography and index are followed by a list of illustrations and addenda et corrigenda.

The foregoing cursory survey of the contents shows that the dissertation is a pioneering study of ancient Indian seals from various angles. Much of the material studied in the present work lay scattered in numerous periodicals, some of them now defunct, excavation reports, catalogues and other occasional publications. Many of the seals and sealings, which are published for the first time, lay locked in the dark corners of various museums and individual collections. To get access to all this material and study it carefully was no easy job, but Dr Thapalyal has ably accomplished this. His treatment of the subject is characterized by objectivity and thoroughness and the suggestions offered by him are mostly well-based. The work is an outcome of years of hard work and critical scholarship.

There are, however, a few points on which it may not be possible to agree with the author. Thus the alternative suggestion that the legend śrī-vindhyabhedana-mahārājasya maheśvara-mahāsenātisrṣṭa-rājyasya vṛṣadhvajasya gautamīputrasya occurring on a Bhita sealing may convey that the Great Lord (Maheśvara) Vindhyabhedana Gautamīputra Vṛṣadhvaja

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had carved out a kingdom for himself with the help of his great army (p. 47, fn. 7) does not appear probable, for atisrsta can mean only "given away" or "made over" and not "created". Similar is the case with regard to the statement that Sivabodhi, Vasubodhi, Candrabodhi and Śrībodhi whose names are found on certain sealings discovered in the course of excavations at Tripuri were not known before the discovery of these sealings (pp. 41-2). As we have shown elsewhere, Tripuri has also yielded a large number of Bodhi coins and the Bodhis did not rule in western India as suggested by E. J. Rapson, but in the Tripuri region where they appear to have succeeded the Sātavāhanas (Tripuri [in Hindi], Bhopal, 1971, pp. 29-32). The author is rightly not quite sure (p. 22) if all the persons found mentioned on seals without regal titles but described as ruling chiefs in chapter II can really be so regarded. We are not quite convinced about the alternative suggestion that yuvarāja-bhattāraka-pādīya kumārāmātya occurring on 13 Basarh sealings refers to the kumārāmātyas who were attached to the king as well as the crown prince or maintained a liaison between the two (p. 105, fn. 1), for bhattaraka here appears to be an honorific. Following the commonly accepted opinion, the author regards apramada as a motto (p. 326). It is equally, if not more, probable, however, that the expression is comparable to modern "handle with care", and may have been stamped on important documents or letters about the safety of which the carriers had to be watchful. Pravataka mentioned on a Rajghat sealing (p. 24) may be the same as Parvata known from a Kauśāmbī sealing, Pravataka being an error for Parvataka. The name Navva known from a Rajghat sealing (p. 26) appears to be the Prakrit form of Navya and may not in that case be identical with Nava of some Kauśāmbī coins. In connection with the office of taravara (pp. 98-9) reference should have been made to Nagarjunakonda inscriptions referring to talavaras and mahātalavaras. Plate III.5 is topsyturvy. On plate III.2 there is an animal figure in the lower part which has not been noticed on page 31. Shrines, monasteries and administrative divisions in Appendix A should have been listed separately.

However, minor as these points are, they do not detract from the intrinsic merit of the work which is bound to remain a standard work of reference for many years to come. We wish Dr Thapalyal takes up the study of later seals of north India as also of south Indian seals. The printing, get-up and illustrations are superb and set a model for other research publications.

NAGPUR UNIVERSITY NAGPUR

AJAY MITRA SHASTRI

A. K. WARDER, An Introduction to Indian Historiography (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1972). Pp. xvi+196. Rs. 36.00.

It has been a persistent belief in some academic circles that Indians have been an a-historical people with no real historical sense and no truly historical literature. Admittedly, in spite of her great literary heritage, India has failed to produce historians comparable to the Graeco-Roman scholars such as Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Livy and Tacitus,

though there has been little recognition of the fact that in Greece itself historiography was a late development. Several attempts have so far been made to disprove the absence of historical works in early India. In the early 19th century Tod (Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, i-iii, London, 1829-32) recognized the value of sources bearing on the history and culture of Rajasthan. In the early 20th century Pargiter (The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age, London, 1913; Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, London, 1922) emphasized the importance of the Purāṇic literature as a source of early Indian history, though his works are no more than a "highly improbable euphemistic reconstruction from plain myth". A more recent work to prove the historical sense of Indians has been produced by V. S. Pathak (Ancient Historians of India, London, 1966). Warder's present book is the latest in the series of attempts in this direction.

The work under review is spread over 22 short chapters, the first two of which form an introduction on Indian civilization (pp. 1-9) and the brahmanical tradition of its origin (pp. 10-9). The remaining ones merely present an introductory survey of the indigenous literature relevant to the history of India up to the period of the Marathas and do not go deep into the problem of the development of historiographical patterns in various categories of Indian literature. The gathas and akhyanas of the Rgveda are said to have formed the basis of later Indian historical tradition. Attention is drawn to the later Vedic references to itihasa (tradition) and Purana (antiquity or history). Itihasa, we are told, became in later times the more general term embracing all historical and related traditions including those recorded in the Puranas (p. 17). On account of their wide coverage the Puranas are described as universal history and thought of as providing a comprehensive view of ancient India up to the time of the Guptas. But why the genealogical lists of kings found in different Puranic texts do not go beyond the Gupta period has not been explained. Nor has the credibility of the Puranic literature for purposes of historical reconstruction been examined. Warder's assertion that "a critical combination of the Purānic, Buddhist and Jaina traditions provides a solid chronological basis for the whole of Indian history" (p. 157) is open to question in view of the highly debatable chronology of most early Indian texts. For the post-Gupta period, the author points out, considerable supplementary material is available in biographies or literary works on individual rulers. But his treatment of the biographical literature is in no way an improvement upon that found in Pathak's work referred to above.

Warder tells us that the practice of writing traditional universal history on the Purant pattern could not continue in the face of political fragmentation caused by the Turkish invasions. There developed, therefore, "separate histories of independent countries in India" (p. 157). This obviously is an inadequate explanation of the growth of regional historical literature which, to a considerable extent, owed its origin to political atomism generated by feudalism in the early medieval period. The 18 chapters devoted to regional histories are sketchy and often superficial and may only serve the need of undergraduates.

Throughout the work analysis has been a casualty. No attention has been paid to the general social context of Indian historical literature. Nor has any attempt been made to expose the prejudices of its writers. The author's claim that his is "a pioneering work introducing an unknown subject to modern readers and offering mostly original research

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and tentative, even revolutionary, conclusions" (p. viii) sounds presumptuous. For there is nothing strikingly "original" or "revolutionary" about his conclusions. It is a disappointing work; it raises hopes which it fails to fulfil.

PATNA UNIVERSITY
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D. N. JHA

D. DEVAHUTI, Harsha: A Political Study (Oxford University Press, London, 1970).

Pp. xx + 295; 11 plates; 1 map. Rs. 75.00.

The history of the great king Harṣavardhana of Sthānvīśvara and Kānyakubja has been treated in the book under review in seven chapters dealing with the sources (pp. 1-12), kingdoms of northern India in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. (pp. 13-55), the Vardhanas (pp. 56-81), the extent of Harṣa's empire (pp. 82-110), the principles of polity (pp. 111-41), Harṣa's administration (pp. 142-206) and the Indo-Chinese missions and Harṣa's death (pp. 207-29). Besides a small section entitled "Conclusion", there are three appendices on the Harṣa era, the coins of Harṣa Śīlāditya and the Maukhari coins. The printing and get-up of the book are satisfactory.

Among the merits of the book for which Dr Devahuti may be congratulated we should mention that she has placed before us an amount of Chinese material especially in chapter VII. She has also sometimes exhibited considerable critical acumen, for example, in rejecting the suggestions that Mahāsenagupta was a Gauḍa (p. 38), that Śaśāṅka was not responsible for the murder of Rājyavardhana (pp. 72-3) and that there was no era starting from Harṣa's accession in A.D. 606 (pp. 235 ff).

Unfortunately the book suffers from certain defects the first of which is that it is full of minor errors. Attention may be drawn to a few of these taken at random, such as Kshitisa Chādā-mani for kṣitīśa cūdāmani (p. 15), dīnara for dīnāra and Sākala for Śākala (p. 42), Śambhūyasas for Sambhuyasas and Kongoda for Kongoda (p. 43), mahā-kārtika for mahā-kārtākrtika (p. 48), maha-dhirāja and mahā-dhirāja for mahādhirāja (p. 49), Sri-śa for Śrī-śa (p. 35), etc. The name Bhānu, which is an eka-deśa of the name Bhānudatta, has been throughout written as Bhānuh (pp. 44,270). Even the map in the book is not free from such defects. As examples may be cited Nishādha-parvata for Niṣadha-parvata, Pārayātra for Pāriyātra, Anurādhāpura for Anurādhapura, etc., though the mistake Kapilavastu for Kapilavāstu may have been borrowed from others. In Manyakheta (Mankhed) the second name is Malkhed. What is more important is that this entry should have been omitted from the map of India in Harşa's age (A.D. 606-47), because Mānyakheta was not known before Rāstrakūta Amoghavarşa I (A.D. 814-78). The entry "W. Chālukyas" is placed near Ajanta and Ellora a few hundred miles above Vātāpi which was the capital of the said Cālukyas. The location of Pundravardhana (Bogra district, Bangladesh) to the north-east of Karnasuvarna (Murshidabad district, West Bengal) and of Gudur (Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh) to the east of Pistapura (East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh) is 122

equally unfortunate. Kandahar is not "Nava-Gandhāra" since its name is really a modification of Alexandria.

A more serious defect of the book is that it is not up-to-date. Although published in 1970, it refers (p. 37) to a small note on the Dubi plates of Bhāskaravarman appearing in Indian Historical Quarterly, xxvi (1950), but fails to take note of the various important sugges. tions contained in an elaborate paper on the inscription in Epigraphia Indica, xxx (1953.4). Again, Dr Devahuti speaks of Śaśānka's conquest of Dandabhukti in northern Orissa and of northern and central Orissa after his westward expansion was checked by Harsa in A.D. 606-7 (p.43). Apart from the mistake in locating Dandabhukti (the modern Danton region in the Midnapore district of West Bengal with a part of the Balasore district in Orissa) in "Northern Orissa" and the difficulty in determining whether Śaśānka could have been effectively checked in A.D. 606-7, it is now known from the Jayrampur plate of Gopacandra's first regnal year that the Gauda expansion towards Orissa began during the days of Śaśānka's predecessors who were actually in the possession of Dandabhukti (Orissa Historical Research Journal, xi, 1963; Indian Studies: Past and Present, vi, 1966; Sircar, Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization, 2nd edn, 1965, pp. 530-1). The reign of Vākātaka Harisena has been placed in c. A.D. 475-500 (p. 47) on the basis of Hyderabad Archaeological Series, no. 14 (1941), but without any reference to the Hisse Borala inscription of his father Devasena, which bears the date A.D. 458 and has been published more than once since 1964 (Epigraphia Indica, xxxvii, pt. i, 1967 and Journal of Ancient Indian History, i, 1967-8).

There are also many cases in which we find it difficult to agree with the views expressed or accepted in the book. Thus Kumāra, whom Harsa installed according to a passage in the Harşacarita, has been identified with the Kāmarūpa king Kumāra alias Bhāskaravarman (p. 75). But this is impossible because Bhāskaravarman was apparently an already anointed king before Harsa's accession to the throne and occupation of the Maukhari kingdom in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar after it had been freed from the Malavas and Gaudas. The fact is that the Later Guptas of Malava (East Malwa) and the Gaudas of West Bengal on the one hand and the Maukhari and Kamarupa kings on the other were partners in mutually hostile combinations and Bhāskaravarman was eager to make friends with Harşa when he was preparing to fight and had not achieved any success against the enemies of the assassinated Maukhari king. The Harsacarita statement may refer to the installation of Mahasenagupta's son Kumāragupta (who was at the Sthānvīśvara court since the usurpation of his father's throne by Devagupta) as the viceroy of some territory under Harsa. The author states that the coin-mould of Jaya discovered at Nalanda does not prove his hold over Magadha because the mould is easily portable (p. 33, fn. 6). But can we conceive of any use of the coin-mould except the issuing of coins for people who were familiar with Jaya's monetary issues? We prefer "Pushyabhūti dynasty" to "Vardhana dynasty" (p. 56 and elsewhere) because only the former is supported by Bāṇa's Harşacarita. We also do not agree with the extent of Harsa's empire suggested by Dr Devahuti. Thus while there is no proof of the extension of Harsa's power in Samatata, Kashmir seems to have been under his political influence. "Harsa Vikramāditya of Ujjayinī" mentioned in the Rājatarangiņī seems to be no other than Harsa Śīlāditya (p. 97) whom Indian literary tradition confused with

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the traditional Vikramāditya (cf. Madhusūdana's *Bhāvabodhinī* noticed in *Indian Antiquary*, ii, 127-8). It is doubtful whether the name Sindhu could be applied to the part of Sind lying to the east of the lower Indus (as its proper name was Sauvīra) and whether Harṣa's empire included that area.

D. C. SIRCAR

CALCUTTA

YOGENDRA MISHRA, The Hindu Sahis of Afghanistan and the Punjab, A.D. 865-1026 (A Phase of Islamic Advance into India) (Vaishali Bhavan, Patna, 1972). Pp. xv + 280. Rs. 30.00.

The present work, as the title indicates, deals with the history of the dynasty described as Hindu-shāhiyas by al-Bīrūnī and Śāhi by Kalhaṇa. The subject is not unknown to students of Indian history though a single-volume study has been published by Professor Yogendra Mishra for the first time. However, it is based on the well-known existing source material on the subject, such as the Rājataraṅgiṇī, al-Bīrūnī's India and the English translation by Elliot and H. C. Ray of some relevant passages of the Arabic/Persian texts dealing with the Ghaznavid invasions of northern India. Of a total of nine chapters seven are devoted to the study of eight individual rulers of the dynasty. The book begins with the sources and problems and ends with the dispersal of the Shāhi population after its final defeat at the hands of Maḥmūd of Ghazna.

There is much to be criticized especially in the first half of the book. To begin with, no explanation is offered as to why the rulers of this particular dynasty were designated as Hindu-shāhis or Shāhis. The author is vaguely aware that the Turki-shāhis and Hindushāhis did not represent two different groups (p. 5) because Kalhana does not make any such distinction, yet he does not identify them in clearer terms. He describes the Turkishāhis as a "Hinduised or Hindu dynasty that had become a part of Hindu history" (p. 9). One wonders what is implied by the term "Hindu" here and what exactly is the historical significance of the term "Hindu" and "Shāhi". Some Muslim writers have been quoted to say that the Shāhis were known as Rajputs or Bhaṭṭi Rajputs (p. 5), but no comment is offered. The treatment of the territory ruled over by the Hindu-shāhis (pp. 5-6) is far from satisfactory. One would have liked to know when, how and why the Hindu-shāhis came to occupy the territory over which they ruled and what exactly are the sources of information on this particular point. Had the author made an effort to probe into these problems the book might not have begun with the reign of Lalliya-shāhi. While discussing the chronology of the Shāhis the author has sadly missed a very important and firm chronological peg, that is, the contemporaneity of Kamaluka-shāhi and the Ṣaffārid chief 'Amr b. Lais (c.A.D. 879-900) as indicated by the Jawāmi-u'l Hikāyāt. Further, it is wrong to assume that Kabul was lost to Ya'qūb b. Lais in A.D. 870-1 during the reign of Lalliya-shāhi (p. 25). A close study of the reign of Lalliya-shāhi (p. 25). study of the Ta'rīkh-i Sīstān (pp. 199-200, 205-8) and Zain-ul Akhbār (p.11) shows that Ya'qūb captured the districts of ar-Rukhkhah and Zamin-dawar in A.D. 863-4 and Panjshir and Andarak. Andarab in A.D. 872-3; these comprised the western and northern parts of the kingdom of Kabul. He, however, failed to capture the Kabul valley which remained in the hands of the Shāhis till A.D. 988-9. During the conflict between Ya'qūb b. Lais and the Shāh of Kabul the latter, who was also known as the Zunbil, was killed in A.D. 863-4 and his son, Pīrūz or Fīrūz (Zain-ul-Akhbār, p. 11; Ta'rīkh-i-Mas'ūdī, i, 507-8) was finally captured in A.D. 872-3 and imprisoned in the Qaleh Nai (Ta'rīkh-i-Sīstān, p. 216). This king who fought and was killed by Ya'qub cannot obviously be identified with Lalliya-shāhi as the latter out. lived Ya'qūb b. Lais. That Kabul valley remained with the Shāhis is proved by the fact that during the reign of Lalliya's successor, Kamaluka, the Shāhis came in conflict with the Saffārids at Sakavand (in Logar valley) which is situated between Ghazna and Kabul about seven miles from the modern town on Baraki-Barak. This encounter took place some time in A.D. 898-900 when 'Amr b. Lais was at the height of his power. Again, during the reign of Shāh Jayapāla (c. A.D. 960-1002), who is described as the Kabul-shāh by Muslim -writers, an action took place between the Shāhis and Sabuktigīn, then a subordinate chief of Boritigin, at a place called Charakh which is not very far from Sakavand (Tabagāti-Nāsīrī, Eng. tr., i, 73). Jayapāla had to fight again against Sabuktigīn in A.D. 988-9 on the battelefield of Kindi which is situated 10 miles south of Jalalabad town and 23 miles east of Gandamak. This time the Shāhis were decisively defeated and lost the province of Lamghan and by implication the valley and town of Kabul, since there is no evidence to prove that after A.D. 988-9 the Shāhis had any contact with Kabul.

The account of Kamaluka is equally muddled though his reign is well attested by epigraphic, literary as well as numismatic sources. Confusion has been created by the remark that he issued hamsa type, Peacock type and Elephant/Lion type coins with Śrī Padma legend and Bull/Horseman type coins with Śrī Khamarayakaḥ or Śrī Khudvayakaḥ legend (p. 42). There are no Shāhi coins of hamsa and Peacock types with Śrī Kamala legend and no Elephant/Lion type with Śrī Padma legend in the British Museum. The Bull/Horseman coins with Śrī Khamarayakaḥ or Khudvayakaḥ legend are conspicuous by the presence of the Arabic 'adl, meaning justice, inscribed in Kūfic character above the head of the reverse horse, which speaks for their strong Muslim links. These coins were issued not by Kamaluka but by a Muslim rival of the Shāhis.

Certain other historical details and interpretations of the author can be faulted. It is pure speculation to say that Kamaluka had the name Toramāṇa because his father Lalliya had a Turkish wife who was the daughter of Lagatūrmāna, the last of the Turki-shāhis (p. 42). Similarly, his interpretation that the term hastika (Rājatarangiṇī, vii, 65) be taken for Hastināpura, which has been imagined to have become the new capital of Trilocanapāla (pp. 190-5) is nothing but wishful thinking. Udabhāṇḍapura was lost not in the time of Jayapāla (p. 126) but in the time of Ānandapāla after the battle of Chach in A.D. 1008-9. There is no evidence to prove that either Lalliya or Bhīmadeva was the founder of a new era (pp. 23-4, 66).

The weakest point of the book, however, is the treatment of the Shāhi coinage, as numis matics is not the forte of the author. In his zeal to prove that Lalliya was a great king the

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author has attributed the inauguration of a new coinage, the well-known but difficult to understand Bull/Horseman and Elephant/Lion type coins, to the "founder of the Hindushāhi dynasty" (pp. 17-23). It has been speculated that Lalliya adopted the titles Spalapatideva, Vakkadeva and Sāmantadeva, the latter meaning a feudatory chief. Evidently, Professor Mishra has not examined these coins and is not acquainted with the series. There are no dates on these coins. The early issues have Bactrian legend which was misunderstood by the copyists in the later issues and looks like a sequence of Arabic numerals. It was this deformed Bactrian legend which was long ago mistaken for dates. This form of legend is found not only on the Shahi coins but also met with on the Bull/Horseman coins of the Sultans of Ghazna who succeeded Mahmud I. The legend Samantadeva was used as a substitute of Spalapatideva on the silver coins and Vakkadeva was used as a substitute on copper issues. Later on Vakkadeva was replaced by Samantadeva on the copper coins. The legend Samantadeva is first met with on the gold issue of Bhimadeva (Numismatic Chronicle, 1952, pp. 133-5). On this basis it can be concluded that this title was first adopted on the coins by Bhimadeva-shahi and the Bull/Horseman and Elephant/Lion coins with Samantadeva legend appeared during his reign. The same legend is found on the Elephant/Lion issues of al-Muqtādir billāh (A.D. 908-32), the 'Abbāsid caliph who was a contemporary of Bhimadeva, and on the Bull/Horseman issues of the successors of Mahmud I of Ghazna. Is it to be concluded that all of them were feudatory chiefs? According to the author, the entire Bull/Horseman and Elephant/Lion coinage was the product of three reigns, those of Lalliya, Kamaluka and Sāmand (?) and Bhīmadeva. But what happened to Jayapāla, Ānandapāla and Trilocanapāla? Jayapāla had a long reign of over 40 years, ruled over an extensive kingdom and fought at least two major battles against the Chaznavids which would call for copious coinage, but no coins are attributed to him. The problem of the Shāhi currency is not as simple as has been made out. Neither did this currency begin with Lalliya-shāhi; nor did it end with Bhīmadeva-shāhi. To understand the history of the Shāhis and their coinage one has to go back to the history of Afghanistan during the Kuṣāṇa, Sassanian and Hephthalite periods. It is in this perspective that one can hope to solve some crucial problems relating to the history and coinage of the Shāhis, whether they be called Turki-shāhis or Hindu-shāhis. It is in this context that the problem of the dispersal of the Shāhi population to different parts of northern India and the adoption of the Bull/Horseman currency by a number of ruling dynasties of northern India can provide a new dimension to the student of early medieval Indian history.

To sum up, this is not a book which will greatly commend itself to specialists and the general reader may find that there is a book on the subject which deserves to be better known than it is at present.

D<sub>AULAT</sub> R<sub>AM</sub> College D<sub>ELHI</sub>

PRATIPAL BHATIA

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SRINIVAS RITTI AND B. R. GOPAL, (ed), Studies in Indian History and Culture (Professor P. B. Desai Felicitation Volume) (Karnataka University, Dharwar, 1971). Pp. 584; 41 plates. Rs. 50.00.

The editors Dr Srinivas Ritti and Dr B.R. Gopal have done a commendable job in bringing out a felicitation volume in honour of Professor P. B. Desai, an eminent epigraphist and historian. The 82 essays of this collection are arranged in eight sections on archaeology, epigraphy, manuscripts, architecture and sculpture, history, religion and philosophy, language and literature, and culture. In spite of this elaborate arrangement the volume gives the impression of a medley collection of essays without integration to any common themes. The section on language and literature hardly notices any important issues, while the one on religion and philosophy discusses only philosophical and not religious problems. A separate section on culture was really not needed. Curiously, this section has two articles on education, although educational institutions have been studied in the history section. If the reader can ignore all this, he will find enough valuable material on different aspects of Indian history and archaeology.

The section on archaeology has three important essays which invite the reader's attention to the sequence of proto-historic cultures in Karnataka. Thorough excavation of the Neolithic sites in southern Karnataka (district of Mysore) and of the Chalcolithic sites in northern Karnataka (districts of Belgaum and Bijapur) shows that the two regions represent two different proto-historic traditions. The concentration of the Chalcolithic sites in northern Karnataka contrasts with the sparsely distributed Chalcolithic sites of Piklihal, Maski, Utnoor, Yelleswaram and Nagarjunakonda in the central and lower reaches of the Krishna. Also, unlike in northern Karnataka, at the latter sites the Chalcolithic is rapidly succeeded by the iron-using Megalithic cultures. Further south, at the sites of T. Narsipur and Hemmige the Chalcolithic phase is merely an intrusion, intervening for a short period between the Neolithic and the Iron Age Megalithic cultures. Even this intrusive phase does not occur in the most southerly sites of Karnataka, such as in the district of Mysore, where in 112 out of 113 sites Megalithic habitational remains have been found overlying the immediately preceding Neolithic phase. The absence of Chalcolithic phase is also noticed at Paiyampalli in north Tamil Nadu. In view of all this it has been provisionally suggested that the Neolithic of southern Karnataka was a typical culture unaffected by the northern Chalcolithic. Further, it is also possible to suggest that this type was peculiar to a region which did not contain any source of copper. Even in modern times no source of copper has been reported from southern Karnataka, although there are quite a few of them in the upper reaches of the Krishna in northern Karnataka.

Pottery remains of the northern Karnataka Chalcolithic sites illustrate that the region was a meeting-ground of various pottery traditions including those represented by the Savalda pottery, the pre-firing white painted pottery of Prakash and the black slipped pottery of Kayatha in Ujjain. As regards the presence of Indus pottery forms, these might have travelled along the western littoral via Lothal, Rangpur, and Bhagatrav. The possibility of this route brightens up in view of the discovery of marine shells, presumably of Arabian Sea origin, at the sites.

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Archaeological evidence from excavations at Kanheri throws welcome light on the economic activities of the Buddhist monks. Reporting on the basis of structural activity at Kanheri, S. R. Rao says that immediately after their occupation of the Kanheri cave (first century A.D.) the Buddhist monks started a metallurgical workshop (second century A.D.) where smelting, purification of metal and fashioning of metal objects were practised. The three types of furnaces probably indicate heating of the metal at different temperatures. The discovery of 24 terracotta sealings and a rectangular clay frame used for fixing the sealings suggests the manufacture of cultus-sealings for the use of monks and merchants. In another interesting article K. R. Alur discusses the relevance of archaeological animal remains to history. Working on the bones collected from Hallur, Sangankallu, T. Narsipur, Terdal and other sites he shows that concussion in the joints of bones affirms that the animals, which included the horse, were commissioned to heavy work such as the drawing of cartload. Alur is inclined to connect the Neolithic horse at Hallur with the Aryans. Such a possibility is at the moment not supported by circumstantial evidence. Moreover, it is unlikely that the quick-paced Aryans ever used the horse as a packanimal. Most likely the horse was yoked to lightly-built wooden chariots or chariot-like cars, the discovery of which is eagerly awaited. Further laboratory tests of animal remains may be helpful in establishing the ratio between the amount of pressure applied and the size of concussion in bone-joints resulting from it; this, in turn, may determine the nature of the vehicle, heavy or light, drawn by the horse.

Moral lapse on the part of the monks was a recurring evil in the Saivite monasteries of the Deccan. Records of the 10th and 11th centuries not only warn the monks against developing intimacy with the dancing women of the temple, but even stipulate their expulsion from the order. A 16th century Aravidu record studied by J. D. M. Derrett shows that the problem was temporarily solved by allowing married superiors of a monastery to hold the office of the pontiff.

Of the two manuscripts noticed in this volume one, the Veruļšivālayamāhātmya, is a 17th century Marathi text which gives interesting information regarding the construction of the Kailasa temple of Ellora. The other manuscript, an 18th century Sanskrit document, is a valuable addition to source-material for the study of the 'Ādil Shāhīs of Bijapur.

In the history section J. N. Kamalapur discusses the Aryan practice of eating horse meat and gives literary and archaeological evidence in support of his opinion. That the flesh of horse was eaten by the Aryans or proto-Aryans is suggested by K. R. Alur's findings on archaeological animal remains at the Neolithic site of Hallur. Alur shows that extraction or suction of marrow contained in the joint of bones is indicated by the bones of horses at the site. M. D. Sampath's "The Chitrameli" (p. 314), a guild of agriculturists, is another informative essay in this section but Krishnaswamiengar's "The Spirit of 1857" (p. 255) is carelessly written, undocumented and atrociously full of quotations.

The lower age limit of the original Harivamśa (A.D. 200) is decided by Mirashi on the basis of fresh literary and epigraphic evidence. In another article B. Sitaraman questions the equation of āsuvika with ājīvika. He cites profusely from Tamil inscriptions to establish that the term āsuvika does not refer to the ājīvika sect, but means the community of yarn merchants, and āsuvika kadamai a tax on yarn mills or yarn godowns.

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A biographical sketch and a bibliography are useful appendices, but wrong spelling of important Sanskrit and English words affects readability at many places; for example, Kakutsthavarmā is printed as Kākutsthavarma (pp. 57-9), martial as marshall (p. 190) and preceding as preceding (p. 149).

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R. N. NANDI

AJAY MITRA SHASTRI, India as Seen in the Brhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1969). Pp. xxiv + 556; 21 Plates. Rs. 50.00.

Varāhamihira, the renowned astronomer, was a veritable genius. He wrote authoritative treatises on different subjects; the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, however, is his *magnum opus*. Dr Shastri has painstakingly scanned, analysed, classified and interpreted the vast amount of information contained in the monumental work.

The eight chapters of Dr Shastri's book deal with the life and times of Varāhamihira and his works; geographical data, listing information on mountains, rivers, forests, oceans, peoples, localities, etc., and collating it with evidence from other sources; religion, providing information on the deities, religious beliefs and practices of brāhmaṇical sects; social life, dealing with varṇas, jātis, marriage, family, position of women, food and drinks, medicine, perfumery and toilet, dress and ornaments; economic life, detailing information on agriculture, horticulture, flora and fauna, arts and crafts, trade and industry, weights and measures, coinage, etc; astrology in everyday life, an admixture of scientific knowledge and superstitious beliefs; fine arts, dealing with architecture, sculpture, painting and music; and literature, giving information on the different authors and works referred to in the Bṛhatsaṃhitā. Then follow four useful appendices on polity and administration, Jupiter's cycles, rainfall and science of exploring underground water springs, together with a select bibliography, an exhaustive index and 21 plates.

Some interesting items of information bearing on culture gleaned from the Brhatsamhila are: mention of moon and not Kubera as dikpāla; the treating of Skanda and Viśākha as two distinct divinities (similar to the tradition of the Mahābhāṣṇa and Huviṣka's coins); reference to mahārājādhirāja Dravyavardhana, unknown from any other source; ceremonial eating of the meat of buffalo and bull by kings; the prescription of square umbrellas for the use of commoners (which perhaps was never put in practice); the high honour bestowed on the sthapati, a non-dvija, in an otherwise caste-oriented society; the notion that thorny, milky and multi-flower or multi-fruit bearing trees near a house would bring disaster; the belief that fluctuation in prices is caused by the conjunction of heavenly bodics; very advanced scientific ideas on the phenomenon of lunar and solar eclipses along with superstitious beliefs about them; interesting details about jewels and jewel industry; chemical methods of breaking rocks; science of exploring underground water springs; meteorological details; prescription of several rites for avoiding calamities (one such rite, Koṭihomō, was performed, to no effect, during the fatal illness of Puṣpabhūti Prabhākaravardhana),

etc. Varāhamihira's statement that if the mleccha Greeks could be proficient in astrology, the dvijas should be more so smacks of a sense of racial pride of the Hindus, a feature commented upon by Alberuni also.

Dr Shastri has compiled a mass of information to determine the period in which Varāhamihira lived and wrote. He righty opines that Śaka kāla of Alberuni begins in A. D. 78 and is not the Cyrus era or the Nirvāṇa era, and ably upholds Alberuni's view that Varāhamihira's Paūcasiddhāntikā was written in 427 Śaka, i.e., A. D. 505. It has been established that Varāhamihira was a devotee of Sun (not of Nārāyaṇa, as suggested by Aiyangar) and belonged to the Maga family. On the basis of some interesting details regarding the Greek and Roman siddhāntas and the use of several Sanskritized Greek words Dr Shastri is right in suggesting that the legend regarding Varāhamihira's visiting foreign countries would indicate his sojourn in Greece and Rome.

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The author notes that a few decorative features of the temples described in the Brhatsamhitā are found in Gupta temples, but the figures of the Ganga and the Yamuna and some other decorations found on Gupta shrines are not mentioned; that while the seated Buddha image has been described in the work, the standing image, quite common in Gupta period, finds no mention; that the site and measurements of some of the extant temples tally with Varāhamihira's prescription and the sacrifices had come to be inseparably linked with Pauranic rites. Dr Shastri pertinently asks how it would be possible to fulfil Utpala's requirement of reciting appropriate Vedic mantras in the case of deities of post-Vedic origin. The author's assertion on the basis of the Brhatsamhitā that the deity referred to as Hercules by Curtius, whose image was carried by the army of Porus while marching against Alexander, was a dikpāla, is ingenious. He establishes that the one-stringed pearl necklace with a bigger central gem on Kuṣāṇa and Gupta figures should be identified after the Brhatsamhitā as yaṣṭi and not as ekāvalī, as is generally done. He rightly asserts that in view of the specific reference to grafting in the Brhatsamhitā Gode's theory suggesting its introduction in India by the Portuguese should be rejected (pp. 271-2), and that Varāhamihira's use of svara in the sense of seven and the specific mention of four svaras—sadja, madhyama, gāndhāra and rṣabha, prove the fallacy of the view that gāndhāra grāma was not known until Ratnākara (c. A. D. 1247). He has given convincing new translations of some verses (e.g., the translation of caturangulam vasisthah kathayati netrantakarnayorvivaram on p. 416).

In connection with the identification of different topographical features, regions and peoples, we may add that the Bhadras placed by Varāhamihira in the middle country may perhaps refer to the Uttamabhadras; the suggestion of Lankā being a geographical area within India is interesting; the name Purikā also occurs on a grāmajanapada sealing from Nalanda. Though Shastri's identification of Kapitha, the native place of Varāhamihira, with Sankisa on Hsūan Tsang's testimony is plausible, his alternate suggestion identifying it with Kayatha near Ujjain, a great centre of astronomical studies, is more acceptable. Similarly the author's contention that Śāmba was excluded from the galaxy of brāhmanical gods because of his introducing a new cult is ingenious and credible, but the other suggestion ascribing it to the non-Aryan origin of his mother is perhaps more valid. His conclusion that both rāpaka and kārṣāpaṇa in the Bṛhatsamhitā refer to silver coins is well founded. However, his suggestion that the silver coins in the work refer to Gupta currency is more

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convincing than his view that they were issued by the Kalacuri king, Kṛṣṇarāja. One may not agree with the use of the adjective "unimpeachable" for the evidence of Harappan seals on Rudra worship (p. 136), the dating of the Jātaka evidence regarding the location of underground streams to the sixth century B.C., and the statement that "there is no reason to doubt the existence of 12-storeyed structures" referred to by Varāhamihira (p. 402 fn).

The book is well brought out. The linguistic equipment of the author has enabled him to delve deep into the encyclopaedic treatise and illuminate many facets of life and culture of the period. Dr Shastri's book is a significant contribution to Indological studies and will remain a standard work of reference.

Lucknow University Lucknow K. K. THAPALYAL

P. V. SHARMA, *Indian Medicine in the Classical Age* (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi, 1972). Pp. 12+265. Rs. 30.00.

The book seeks to depict the status and condition of various branches of Indian medicine popularly known (even today) as the Ayurveda in the Classical Age, which according to the author spans from A. D. 320 to 740 or from the date of accession of Candragupta I to the death of Yasovarman of Kanauj. It describes, among other things, the basic concepts of the Ayurveda, human anatomy and physiology according to it, materia medica, the therapeutic value of drugs of vegetable, animal and mineral origin, their manufacture, sale and preparations, dietetics, the place of medical science in the curriculum of studies and the types of physicians and their status in society. The sources of information include works of eminent poets such as Kālidāsa, Āryaśūra, Subandhu, Viśākhadatta, Bāṇabhaṭṭa, etc., technical literature of Varāhamihira, the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana, the Nyāyavārtika, Praśastapādabhās ya, the Yājñavalkyasmṛti, the Amarakośa, the Pañcatantra, the Purānas, particucularly the Bhagavata, the Vișnu, the Vayu, the Matsya, the Markandeya, the Brahmanda and the Viṣṇudharmottara, commentaries of Śankarācārya on the Brahmasūtra, the Bhagavadgītā and the Upanisads, and the travel accounts of Fa-hsien, Hsüan Tsang and I-tsing. Some earlier and later works such as the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya, the Kāvyamīmāmsā of Rājaśekhara (A. D. 880-920) and the Prabandhacintāmani of Merutung have also been consulted. Besides, the author has taken into account stray epigraphic evidence. But, as he candidly remarks, "...in this work, only non-medical sources have been utilised" (Introduction, p. 7), and "Bana Bhatta...has been the main source" (Introduction, p. 8). We feel that this should have been reflected in the title of the book which could aptly be Indian Medicine in the Classical Age (Based on non-medical sources, with special reference to Banabhatta's works).

Dr Sharma has brought out the chief trends in the development of Indian medicine, the extent of popularity of the compendia of Caraka and Suśruta, the growth of literature on pathology and medico-botanical lexicon, the redaction and renovation of old texts and writing of treatises such as Aṣṭāngasamgraha and Aṣṭāngahṛdaya, and the emergence of an important branch of medical science dealing with metallic and mercurial preparations.

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He also informs us about the existence of mortuary (śavagṛha) (p. 25), the post-mortem of a corpse (p. 98), the transplantation or grafting of eyes (p. 80), the development of dentistry (p. 81) and the caesarian section and forceps delivery (p. 93). His glossary of medicobotanical drugs as gathered from different Sanskrit classics together with their Latin names wherever possible is particularly valuable. A critical survey of these drugs with a view to tracing the gradual growth in their number and the time, place and causes of their inclusion in the Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia is a desidaratum. It would also throw welcome light on trade relationship and the exchange of useful scientific ideas with other countries in this period. Faith in magic and divine aid for treating a disease (daivavyapāšrayacikitsā) is reflected in recourse to prayers, worship of various deities, mahāmāyuri and mṛtyunjaya spells, recitation of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, etc. We also notice unmistakable tantric influence on the medical science of the period.

The author's list of writers and commentators of Ayurvedic literature of the period should have included the Kāśyapasamhitā, the Nāvanītaka, the Cikitsākalikā of Tīsata, the Sāratthasamgaha of king Buddhadatta or Buddhadāsa of Sri Lanka (fourth century A. D.) and the Macartney manuscript (c. A. D. 350). In describing the basic elements of human body he should not have left out natural bacteria as described by Śankarācārya, as we know that modern medical science is to a large extent based on bacteriology. No light is thrown on the question whether the idea of hot and cold medicaments (usna or sitavirya) came to India from Arabia; nor is it made clear whether the science of diagnosis through feeling the pulse originated in India or came from China, Arabia or Persia, though I-tsing is quoted to the effect that "In the healing arts of acupuncture and cautery and the skill of feeling the pulse China has never been superceded (sic) by any country of Jambudwipa (In dia)" (p. 14). Veterinary science and the science of plants (vrksayurveda) which formed parts of the Ayurveda have not been discussed. A separate chapter on state and public health was called for, as the state laid down the qualifications of a physician, made arrangements for their theoretical and practical training, controlled medical profession, punished negligent doctors and quacks, established charitable hospitals and regulated the conduct of the people to prevent the outbreak of epidemics.

Though well printed and got-up, the book abounds in grammatical and printing mistakes. Diacritical marks are not uniformly used and the transliteration of Sanskrit words has not been carefully done, both "sh" and "s" being used for "q" and "v" and "w" being used for "q". Capital letters have been unnecessarily used. Sometimes the Sanskrit terms are not properly joined, for example, Shrimad Bhāgawata, Śrimad Bhāgwad Gītā, etc. Sentences are at times poorly constructed and usually the Sanskrit terms are not accompanied with their English equivalents in the body of the book. Thus "Rasa Śāstra was fully developed in 10th Cent. A. D. and Nandikeśvara was considered to be its In-charge God (p. 42)"; and the "five Kaṣāyakalpanās such as Kalka, Kvātha, phānṭa, etc. were common. Bhāvanā in Cūrṇa of the Kvātha of the same or similar drug was prevalent as it potentiated its effect (p. 40)". Few readers without some technical knowledge of the subject or proper grounding in Sanskrit can make out the meaning. We are not provided with the exact reference to the inscription on page 25 to verify the statement made. However, the epigraph in question is of Bauka (not Banka), a king of

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the Jodhpur branch of Pratihāras (A. D. 837 and not A. D. 650), and is listed in the *Epigraphia Indica*, xviii, 87. Strangely, the book has no bibliography. We hope the author will remove this defect and not allow printing and compositional mistakes to recur if and when he sends it for the second edition.

GOVERNMENT SANSKRIT COLLEGE RANCHI B. B. MISHRA

A. K. WARDER, *Indian Buddhism* (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1970). Pp. 622. Rs. 60.00.

The book attempts a complete survey of the history, literature and doctrines of Buddhism in India. It is written in a simple and lucid style and is factual in its approach. It avoids all critical, controversial and interpretative questions. It is, in fact, a handy compilation of largely well known material and makes no new or original suggestions. Where it does touch critical or interpretative issues, the result is not always fortunate. For example, the author declares that the only objective technique of textual analysis is the study of metre (p. 14). Metre is doubtless important and Warder has worked on it, but that does not exclude the many other methods of analysis which are today available to critical scholarship. Warder's attempted comparisons at many places of different versions of Buddhist texts, Indian, Chinese and Tibetan, generally fail to elicit anything significant, usually because the comparisons do not appear to be based on the actual contents of the different versions. Nor does the author show any awareness of the progress of Buddhist researches in India.

The doctrines are usually given through summaries of some original texts. This cannot be said to be of great help because several works summarizing important passages from original Buddhist texts are already available. Occasionally Warder's summary is difficult to justify. For example, he interprets sat as the "original matter of the universe" (p. 33). In dealing with Aśoka, Dhamma is translated as "justice" (p. 268) which is misleading. Nidhyapti is interpreted as "consideration" at one place (p. 258) and "intercession" at another (p. 269). Dignāga is spoken of as a believer in some external reality (p. 455) in contradistinction with his own Ālambana-Parīkṣā (p. 451). It is added (p. 461) that Dignāga could be either an "objective idealist" or a "realist"! One wonders what that could mean.

The historical parts of the book dealing with the spread and destruction of Buddhism are eminently readable. The accounts of the Mahāyāna sūtras are valuable as they are so little known. The bibliography of original sources will prove useful to most readers. On the whole the book is a welcome addition to that class of works on Buddhism which seek to give a general survey intelligible to all. Also, it is one of the few works in English which give a comprehensive and yet accurate and compendious account of Buddhism in India. It is a pity that the author fails to mention not only other similarsurveys but

also most of those standard modern writings on different aspects of Buddhism which have so obviously been utilized in the book.

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G. C. PANDE

K. C. MISRA, The Cult of Jagannātha (Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1971). Pp. xvi + 251; 61 plates; 1 map.Rs. 45.00.

The present work is a doctoral dissertation approved by the Calcutta University and hailed by Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji as "a unique production" (p. vii) and "quite an event in the domain of Indological studies" (p. viii). It provides a curious example of a perfectly valid historical investigation losing its sense of direction owing to the orthodox Sanskritic scholarship and training which cannot differentiate clearly between later philosophical speculations and original cult-practices. As a result one finds in the later chapters of the book a complete reversal of the historical approach with which the work makes a promising beginning.

Dr Misra starts with a general survey of the history of Indian religions in Orissa with a view to tracing the gradual development of the cult of Jagannatha. This cult is in his opinion a synthetic growth combining in itself the worship of three important rastradevatas or tutelary deities, namely, Jagannātha, Balabhadra and Subhadrā. Jagannātha was originally a deity of the Sabaras, who were an aboriginal tribe inhabiting the regions of Daksina Kośala and Kalinga in the early centuries of the Christian era. They worshipped the deity presumably under the name Mādhava or Nīlamādhava, whose cult has left its traces in the entire region extending from the Vindhyan ranges of central India to the coastal districts of Orissa. Dr Misra suggests that numerous temples dedicated to Vișnu under the name Mādhava found along the lower course of the river Mahanadi indicate that brahmanical civilization progressed along the banks of this river from the distant hinterland of Madhya Bharat to the coastal regions of Orissa and the brāhmanical pantheon incorporated tribal deities "from two different directions", the Mahendra region of Kalinga and Śabarīnārāyana of Dakṣina Kośala (p. 23). When the Māṭhara kings established their hegemony over Kalinga they Aryanized the Sabara deity and worshipped him as a form of Nārāyaṇa on the Mahendra mountain. Owing to their predilection towards Saivism the Gangas worshipped the same deity as Gokarneśvara and the Sailodbhavas described him as Svayambhū, a form of Brahmā (p. 13). This deity was in fact the rāṣṭradevatā of Kalinga and regarded as the family god of the royal dynasties. A similar rāṣṭradevatā existed at Śabarīnārāyaṇa. In between Dakṣiṇa Kośala and Kalinga the forest kingdom of Mahākāntāra, which later came to be known as Gondrama, was ruled by the royal families devoted to the worship of the goddess Stambhesvarī. She too was a Sabara deity having the form of a pillar and was perhaps regarded as the presiding deity of Gondrama (western Orissa). Contemporary epigraphs indicate that in the country of Tosali, i.e., central and eastern Orissa, the worship of a god named Maninagesvara was popular in the

sixth-seventh centuries A.D. It is not clear when and how these three streams of aboriginal worship combined and got transplanted at Puri giving rise to the syncretic cults of Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Balabhadra, but the author attributes this to the period after the decline of the Sailodbhavas when the countries of Kangoda and Tosali came under the rule of the Bhaumakaras, who presumably established the three rāṣṭradevatās in their

newly established kingdom (p. 15).

Dr Misra deserves credit for emphasizing the Sabara origins of the Puri Triad. He vehemently refutes the view of those scholars who derive it from Buddhism and points out that the deities established in the main sanctum of the Puri temple number four including Sudarśana-cakra and not three as presumed by others. The wheel symbol however, has as much significance in Buddhism as in Vaisnavism and the author takes the wind out of his own sail by stating a little later that only three priests worship the three deities simultaneously, the fourth being nirākāra and as such not susceptible to direct worship (p. 146). His attempt to explain the "four" deities in terms of the four matras of pranava or four padas of brahman amounts to a complete abandonment of the scientific approach, and it is strange that he regards the division of the deities into two males and one female a later, post-Rāmānuja feature of the cult (p. 144) after an elaborate attempt in the first chapter to show that the goddess Stambhesvari, also known as Bhagavati, was the prototype of Subhadra. Chapters III, VI and VII are written in this vein and it is categorically stated that the worship of the wooden images in the Jagannātha temple "cannot be confused with the aboriginal form of worship of mere wood or tree" (p. 145) and that daru worship mentioned in the Rgveda has been transformed into the worship of Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannatha and Sudarsana (pp. 72ff). P V. Kane's rejection of Sāyana's interpretation of a Rgvedic hymn as implying a reference to the wooden Vaisnavite deity Purusottama is explained as due to Kane's lack of awareness of the same hymn occurring in the Atharvaveda with a slight variation (p. 71). In the page that follow it appears that the chief concern of the author is to trace the origin of the worship of Jagannātha to Vedic ideas and practices. Thus the carving of wooden images of deities like pillars without arms or legs is ascribed to their being individually incomplete and fractional, each representing one aspect of the absolute; and the quotation from S. N. Rajguru indicating the worship of deities in the form of wooden pillars by the hill tribes of Orissa (p. 14) is ignored in the face of the acknowledged association of the Sabaras with the deities of the Puri temple.

It is easy to pick holes in the book. Its main drawback lies in the author's inability to see that the later Vaiṣṇava theologians sought to justify and rationalize the practices already in vogue and that their religious or philosophical explanations cannot be deemed to be prescriptions for the early practices. Dr Misra's bid to trace the history of the Jagannātha cult from the earliest times to the present day prevents him from going into the depth of the subject. For example, nothing is said on the basis of medieval inscriptions about the precise connection of the temple with the social and economic life of the people of Orissa and the role of religious functionaries attached to it. Appendix II dealing with the impact of the cult of Jagannātha on the socio-religious life of the people of Orissa is utterly inadequate and does not back up with statistics such general statements as

"Jagannātha is the biggest landlord in India. He is also the richest deity of the countyr" (p. 208). Sometimes the information given in the body of the book is repeated in the (p. 200).

attached footnote (e.g., p. 111, lines 11-4 and reference no. 30, p. 114). Some books appearing in Appendix III recur in the Select Bibliography. Kangoda is throughout spelt as Kongada, and Lāmā Tārānātha is assigned to A.D. 1200 (p. 84). Such examples of careless writing can be multiplied. Nevertheless, the close association of the cult of Jagannātha from its inception with political power has been clearly brought out, and although Dr Misra does not work out its full implications, he merits encomiums for extracting useful information from a wide range of sources.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY NEW DELHI

SUVIRA JAISWAL

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN, Indian Temple Styles—The Personality of Hindu Architecture (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. xii+184; 50 Plates. Rs. 80.00.

This book is the latest addition to the increasing literature on ancient Indian temple architecture. While most of the works on the subject provide descriptive accounts of monuments or deal with temples from an art-historical and/or art-critical point of view, the author deals with the subject from the text-technical angle. Though he does not claim to have developed any new thesis, Mr Soundara Rajan's contribution is substantial in his elucidation of architectural terminology and the analysis of regional bias in the structural forms. The differences he tries to make out between the northern and southern styles of architecture in their diagnostic elements (pp. 17-20) are of considerable interest. The last chapter in the book providing architectural, stylistic and other details of as many as 97 temples, some of which are noticed for the first time, adds special value to the work.

After briefly reviewing the factors responsible for the growth of styles in temple architecture the author classifies temples on stylistic considerations as those belonging to "the Southern Norm", "the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta Traditions", "the Northern Archetype", "Later Chalukyan", etc. The appendix at the end discusses the regional variations of plinth types, ground plans, mahānāsikās, linga types, toraņa types, pillar forms and parivāra shrine types.

In the chapter entitled "The Southern Norm" the author discusses the stylistic development of architecture in Tamil Nadu and adheres to the generally accepted view that Pallava king Mahendravarman I started the practice of excavating rock-cut caves in the Tamil country and that the Laksitayatana cave at Mandagapattu is the earliest rock-cut excavation in his kingdom. Though it is not possible to attribute any of the rock-cut caves in the Pallava kingdom to the pre-Mahendra period, the rock-cut technique was not altogether unknown to the early Tamils as may be seen from such expressions as Kunru-Kuyinarnna-öngu-nilaivāyil in the Nedunelvādai (1.88) and vārai Kuyinranna vānrōy-nedunakar in the Ahanānuru (93, 1·12). The author says that the period of Narasimhavarman I captures

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our attention at Māmallapuram and attributes a good number of caves and all the monoliths (except the Ganesa and Valayankuttai rathas) at the place to him.

He shows that the new additions to the iconographic and ritual concepts in Māmalla's time are Siva as Vīņadhara, Dakṣiṇamūrti, Ardhanārī, Kālāri, Vṛṣabhantika, Harihara Gurumūrti, Bhikṣāṭana, Lakulīśa, Sūrya, Viṣṇu and Brahmā and states that "the Somas. kanda panel on the completed top floor of Dharmaraja ratha is a typical icon in worship for Paramesvaravarman's time until lingas replaced them in the later Pallava stage" (p.27) This leads him to conclude that while the Mahisamardini mandapam at Mahabalipuram is attributable to Māmalla the cella figures in it (Somaskanda with a recumbent Nandī) were completed during the reign of Parameśvaravarman I. He also believes that the Dharmaraja mandapa, the Rāmānuja mandapa, the Adivarāha cave and the Ganeśa ratha at Mahabali. puram were completed during the reign of Paramesvaravarman. In all these four excavations we find a repetitive imprecatory verse indicative of Saiva sectarianism and the incision of this verse in a purely Vaisnava shrine like the Adivaraha cave is a puzzle for which no satisfactory answer is yet available. The author believes that this imprecation would pertain to Rājasimha's reign when it was probably inserted. This may be accepted, though there is no independent evidence to attest the sectarianism of this ruler. The two reliefs of portrait sculptures in the Adivaraha cave temple with the labels "Simhavinnapotrathirajan" and "Mahendrapotrathirajan" are identified by the author as those of Simhavisnu and Mahendravarman, the grand-father and father of Māmalla. While rejecting the view that the portraits may be those of Narasimhavarman I (also called Simhavisnu) and his son Mahendra II and that they were carved during the reign of Parameśvaravarman I Mr Soundara Rajan states that on stylistic considerations the portraits are assignable to the time of Māmalla and "Paramesvara had practically nothing to do with it" (p. 27).

In the light of this it is difficult to follow the author when he states in the same page but in a different context that "Paramesvara was perhaps associated partly with the completing of Adivaraha temple". Perhaps what the author wants to establish is that though the Adivaraha cave temple was completed during the reign of Parameśvara the portrait sculptures in the cave had already been carved in the time of Māmalla. This implies that there is enough stylistic difference between the sculptures of the period of Māmalla and Parameśvara.

The author's statement that "neither during Mahendra's time nor during Mamalla's Kanchipuram received any sufficiently large scale art activity that could have come down to us" (p. 26) is obviously true, though the discovery of a few pillars of the "Mahendra type" with inscriptions of Mahendravarman I in the precincts of the Ekāmranātha temple at the place (now on display in the Government Museum, Madras) would make one feel that at least mandapa-like structures of the time of Mahendravarman could have existed at the place.

Mr Soundara Rajan feels that the Nāgeśvarasvāmī temple at Kumbakonam bears a variant Coļa maṇṭala style perhaps by the Paluvettarayar "under strong non-Chola and probably Pandya influence" (p. 115). It is perhaps the linga pīṭha in the temple that has led him to see Pāṇḍyan influence. It is true that in the years immediately before the battle of Śrīpurambiyam, a part of the Coḷa territory was under Pāṇḍya occupation, as may be

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seen from a few Pāṇḍya inscriptions of the period at places like Aduturai, Kumbakonam, Tiruccirrambalam, etc. But it is difficult to postulate Pāṇḍyan influence on the architecture of the temple as a result of this all too short-lived Pāṇḍyan occupation of or hegemony over the Cola region, as the sculptural and architectural details of the Nāgeśvarasvāmī temple considerably differ from those of the Pāṇḍyan temples of the extreme south. Is it not possible that some Gaṅga influence is seen in the temple as in the Koraṅganātha temple at Srinivasanallur?

The author's assignment of the Akkanna Madanna and lower caves at Vijayawada to the second half of the seventh century, of the first five caves at Mogalrajapuram to the late seventh or early eighth century and of the caves at Undavalli to the middle of the eighth century should be acceptable in the light of the discussion on the features of these caves, though the view that the Mogalrajapuram and Undavalli caves are assignable to the Viṣṇukuṇḍins is persistent.

In the chapter on "the Northern Archetype" Mr Soundara Rajan deals with the more complex theme of the regional styles in north India. The theme is complex because of the many dynasties that were involved in the architectural evolution in the region. The monuments built under the patronage of the Paramāras, Pratihāras, Kalacuris, Candellas, Yādavas, etc., are too numerous; and the author who is fully alive to the confusion in the terminology based mainly on dynastic appellation devotes more attention to the forms and features of the monuments. Among the temples in Gujarat datable in the period prior to the construction of the temples at Roda and Samlaji the author mentions the shrines at Gop, Kadver, Sutrapada, Visawada, Kinnerkheda, Pachdar, Bileshwar, Miani, Pindara, etc. He also shows how the temples in Orissa exhibit, in spite of the evidence of art impulses from other parts, a particular tendency to emphasize the horizontal course and in some cases (as in the case of the Mukhalingeśvara shrine) a cult flavour of an evidently local kind.

The book which is the result of much painstaking work and contains a lot of new material bears evidence of Mr Soundara Rajan's fresh, original and critical appraisal of the data. The style is refreshingly attractive. We welcome this well-documented piece of research on Indian temple architecture which will be of considerable help in studying extant monuments in the light of the available canonical texts bearing on them.

MADRAS

T. V. MAHALINGAM

NIHARRANJAN RAY, Idea and Image in Indian Art (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. 140; 98 Illustrations. Rs. 96.00.

The book originally presented in the form of lectures initiates a new and meaningful line of inquiry into the inter-relationship between the idea  $(bh\bar{a}va)$  and the image or form  $(marti, r\bar{u}pa)$  as seen in India's sculptural art. An idea takes form when it is embodied in language, sound, gesture or plastic image. An image or form in its progressive realization of idea could affect the idea itself. There is a constant interaction between the idea

and the image, and sinceb oth are not static but live entities, affected and influenced by the socio-religious processes, the study of their dialectics in operation as revealed in the realm of Indian art becomes interesting. Professor Ray has chosen for this exercise three abstract ideas and examined their articulation in plastic images; he has also attempted to show how images in their turn influence the lives of the respective ideas. These three ideas and their images are those of bodhi (supreme enlightenment), of matter and life, and of flux. The book is conceived in a simple scheme, starting with the proposition of the theme, followed by the three essays elucidating the theme, and finally the epilogue.

The transformation of idea into image is not necessarily direct, nor is the history of idea always coeval with that of image. The abstract concept of bodhi, which becomes concrete when personified in the Buddha, passes through various stages of development. The Buddha was not originally invested with supra-human qualities but was regarded as a mahāpuruşa (great man) who exhibited in his physical frame several lakṣaṇas (signs) which could be visually articulated and iconographically translated. But the abstract qualities of prajītā (supreme wisdom) and karunā (compassion), and those related to dhyānayoga came to be associated with the Buddha from about the fourth century A.D. owing to certain developments at the socio-cultural and philosophical level. The earliest images of the Buddha date from about 600 years after the demise of Śākyamuni. These early Buddha images in the first century A. D. at Mathura and Gandhara were executed purely on the mundane and physical plane and were devoid of spiritual consciousness. Their form was influenced and conditioned by their respective cultural environments, religious cults and ethnic elements. It is in the fourth-fifth centuries A. D. when the concept of bodhi was enriched by the fully evolved yogic ideology and Mahāyāna ideals of prajītā and karuṇā, when the tools and techniques had advanced for subtle and sensitive effects in plastic modelling and differentiation of planes, and when the sculptors were capable of visual perception and communication of experience that perfection could be reached in the articulation of the evolved idea of bodhi in the Buddha image at Sarnath.

The second essay dealing with the subtle and elusive concept of matter and life takes us to the rock-cut monuments where the immobile rock (matter) is, as it were, given life by sculptors. Professor Ray cites examples from speculative and poetic literature on the inter-relationship of matter and life. He attempts to interpret this interaction in the realm of art and aesthetics, though his effort is directly oriented towards ideological considerations. However, in this essay his interpretation of the vitality and vigour of the newly emerging Paurāṇic-Āgamic religion or neo-brāhmaṇism, which energetically fought the then decaying Buddhism, as giving life and substance to the rock-cut reliefs of the fiftheighth centuries A. D. is a fruitful line of inquiry linking up the art of the period with the socio-religious ideology and behaviour pattern.

The third essay deals with the abstract and complex concept of flux or continuous change which is translated in visual image of sculpture in the ceaseless and rhythmic movement of dance. The author rightly points out that it is not the iconographic but the artistic form that is of greater significance in judging the articulation of the perceptual experience of dance with its flexions and deflexions of the body in three dimensions and in

continuous linear movements and counter-movements. The author examines a number of dancing figures from the period of Harappa culture to the 13th century to see how and to what extent the idea of incessant movement or flux was successfully articulated in the plastic form of these images. The perfect articulation in visual terms of the ceaseless eternal flux is seen in the south Indian bronzes of Siva Naṭarāja.

The three essays, in general, cover many important images of India's creative art. The highest expressions of India's art in the Sarnath images of the Buddha, the rock-cut Maheśamūrti of Elephanta and the south Indian Naṭarāja bronzes represent, according to the author, the perfect articulation of the abstract ideas in concrete, visual language.

The methodological approach throughout is ideological and aesthetic to suit the theme of the book. The author, one of the foremost exponents of the sociological approach to Indian art, sets out from time to time the socio-cultural forces at work behind the transformation of idea into image. He also gives adequate consideration to the material from which images are made, the advancement in tools and techniques of stone-carving and plastic modelling, and the artist's capacity of visual perception of experience and communicating it through artistic forms, as important factors in the articulation of idea in image. He makes it clear—and this is important in evaluating the book—that his approach is not iconographical or archaeological. It is, therefore, natural that his essay on the Buddha image or on dance does not attempt to say more on the iconographical side than what was written by Ananda Coomaraswamy or T. Gopinath Rao. These are essays with a different purpose. Here the themes have been selected to illustrate and elucidate the inter-relationship of idea and image.

The photographs, 98 in number, are judiciously selected to illustrate the main line of inquiry. But more than the photographs, it is the author's beautiful and expressive prose which enlivens the sculptures and vividly brings out the formal qualities of the images.

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DEVANGANA DESAI

ABHAY KANT CHOUDHARY, Early Medieval Village in North-Eastern India (A.D. 600-1200) Mainly A Socio-Economic Study (Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1971). Pp. 411. Rs. 50.00.

The book represents a sincere and commendable attempt to write on a very important but usually neglected field. Despite the oft-repeated admission by historians that early Indian society was basically rural and agrarian in character, the historiography of early India, with certain exceptions noted by the author, shows a general lack of interest in the history of the villages.

The geographical scope of the work covers the present states of UP, Bihar, Bengal, Assam and also Bangladesh, which are regarded as constituting a single "geographical unit" (p. 20), an assumption to which many may not subscribe. Various types of source material of the period between 600-1200 relating to these areas have been mustered,

and in the absence of material relating to the excavation of rural sites the emphasis is naturally on the epigraphic and literary evidence. The detailed discussion of the dates and contents of certain literary texts (Introduction) provides further rationale for the utilization of the material contained in them for the purpose of this study. One, however, wishes that some use was made of the material available on Nalanda, Mainamati and Paharpur (the solitary reference made to Paharpur terracottas is rather of a supplementary nature), as all these establishments may be expected to have drawn largely on the resources of the rural settlements of the areas in which they were located.

A work such as the one under review has to be mainly source-oriented and as such the treatment of topics such as the general lay-out of the villages, land system and agriculture is more detailed than that of the rural people, village organization, cultural life, etc. Two broad types of village settlements emerge out of the discussion on village lay-out. One is pallī for which an unhappy characterization "non-Aryan" has been adopted in this work. It would seem that pallī broadly represented the tribal kind of economic and social organization, as assumption which could be substantiated by a study of their distribution between A.D. 600-1200. The second type, characterized as "Aryan", would correspond to grāma, a village settlement functioning within a much more complicated social structure, although each village did not necessarily have a composite population. Generally the brahmins, agriculturists, weavers, smiths, carpenters and various other categories of artisans are shown as residing in these villages. Dr Choudhary thinks that although in matters of village lay-out, planning etc., silpa-texts such as the Mānasāra and Mayamaṭa present a somewhat idealized picture, they are dependable for a general impression of the population composition of the villages.

References to tribal villages being meagre in the sources, the details relating to the land system, agriculture, crafts and village organization apply more appropriately to villages of the second type. But perhaps the assumed dichotomy (pp. 234 ff) is not always relevant, as the characteristics of folk culture remained predominantly non-brāhmaņical, even though various ethnic groups were integrated within the framework of a peasant society dominated by a brāhmanical superstructure. In his study of the land system, agriculture and village organization, the author has thoroughly re-examined the interpretations of epigraphic and literary material and offered certain new interpretations. Although uncertainty regarding the meaning of such expressions as bhamicchidra (p. 118) is far from dispelled, the details given in these chapters definitely help us formulate certain general impressions about the early medieval period. One such impression is the standardization of production-organization of farming over the vast stretch of north-eastern India, although variations in cultivation techniques, distribution of crops and measurements of land have been noted. This may well have been true also of the structure of village organization in general. If the implications of the boundary marks mentioned in the epigraphs have been rightly understood, an increase in the rural population, implying the dependence of more people on rural land, was one of the developments of the period. This, according to the author, was most marked in the Assam plains. This was also the period when, according to the epigraphs, the creation of brahmanical settlements of various sizes was in full spate. Dr Choudhary does not analyse the impact these or similar settlements may have

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had on the pre-existing structure of relations in the village society, but studies the village organization mainly in terms of the officials mentioned in the context of village administration. His treatment of caste is perfunctory, and its justification may perhaps be found in his statement (p. 220) that "social, economic and political status" rather than mere considerations of caste determined the nature of stratification at the village level. However, at least in certain cases, for example, the brāhmaṇas and the untouchables, status may be assumed to have been fixed in relation to caste. Secondly, the formation in certain areas of agricultural castes (or the fission and fusion of rich agriculturists presumably from within other homogenous groups) with a certain status in the village hierarchy seems to have been a part of the process of rural transformation in this period. The Kuṭumbins and the Kaivartas may be taken to illustrate this point, as noted by the author himself. His frame of reference is, however, varṇa, not jāti.

Of the three appendices in the book the first two listing respectively the villages known from the epigraphs and the landgrants of the period are extremely useful; so is the Bibliography. Several relevant titles, published some years back, are, however, missing. The obvious omissions are D. C. Sircar's Indian Epigraphy and Indian Epigraphical Glossary, R. S. Sharma's Social Changes in Early Medieval India (circa A.D. 500-1200) and B. N. Sharma's Social Life in Northern India (A.D. 600-1000). In his survey of existing works on early villages Dr Choudhary does not mention Niharranjan Ray's Prachin Banglar Dainandin Jivan and P. Niyogi's Bramhanical Settlements in Different Subdivisions of Ancient Bengal. The main weakness of the book is that the author has not analysed his material for rural history in the light of the ideas that characterize the current historiography on early India. His references to feudalism, to decline of trade and commerce and of urban centres are incidental; he has not related his material to these hypotheses. He is also silent about the possible patterns of interaction which the expansion of brāhmanical culture might have set in motion, although the landgrants could be expected to provide some clue to an understanding of this process in early medieval north-eastern India.

On the whole the author's grasp of the sources and their diligent use are unmistakable and the detailed information on various aspects of rural life will surely make the book an essential reference work on the history of the early medieval period.

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B. D. CHATTOPADHYAYA

B. N. SHARMA, Social and Cultural History of Northern India c. 1000-1200 A.D. (Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. xxiv+219; 30 plates. Rs. 70.00.

During the last 15 years scholars have reviewed the political, social, economic and religious history of northern Indian dynasties and people in the period c. A.D. 750-1200. A few of them have concentrated on the period c. A.D. 1000-1200. The objective in each case has been to find out the strength and weaknesses in the character and expression of the early medieval people in the region. Dr Brijendra Nath Sharma evidently felt the need for re-

knitting the same garb. To him it appeared that none before him had made a thorough study of the social and cultural history of northern India for the two hundred years before A.D. 1200. As he states in the Preface: "...there is no single work making a complete study of the socio-cultural conditions as they prevailed in the country during the period c. 1000 to 1200 A.D". Probably greater utilization of the excavation reports and references to sculptures induced him to make such a claim.

Perhaps it is presumptuous for an author to maintain that his book is perfect in respect of the collection and presentation of materials. A look at the contents of the book under review will show that Dr Sharma has devoted eight chapters to social and only one to economic life. There are many aspects of the economic life, as for example, the interrelation of land system, usury, taxation and the people, which have not been dealt with at all by him. Much more could be written about the Rajputs, backward and depressed classes, gotras, influence of the tantras, etc. Further, some aspects of life, and not the total outlook, of the people of different strata of society have been studied. Not a single line has been written on the social life of the Muslim settlers and the role of the Ṣufīs. Little attention has been paid to the regional peculiarities.

The first eight chapters deal with a survey of the political condition, caste system. education, women, dress and ornaments, food and drinks, fasts, festivals and pilgrimages and Hindu-Muslim relations. There are five appendices, of which two relate to some gotras. pravaras and śākhas (Appendix A) and sub-sections of the Kāyasthas (Appendix B). The author frequently takes us to the eighth and ninth centuries and sometimes also to the 15th and 16th centuries. No doubt this shows his wide reading, but on many occasions he does not state whether there was a break with the past in the 11th or 12th century with the result that readers fail to discern the extent of continuity and change. There are a few instances when the author has expressed divergent and seemingly incompatible opinions or made unguarded statements. Thus he cites numerous examples of the migration of brahmanas in the ninth and 10th centuries (pp. 16-7), but observes that their migration was "a marked feature of the eleventh century" (p. 176). As regards the agricultural products of the 11th-12th centuries he maintains that "Though no definite information is available about the products in Northern India, these may well have been almost the same as at present" (p. 134). It is well known that fruits such as papaya, guava, pineapple, and cashew nuts were introduced in India by the Portuguese and potato and maize were unknown to the Indians for a long time after the 12th century.

Dr Sharma has sometimes failed to interpret his data correctly. He thinks that Śrotriya, Śukla, Triveda and Pāthaka became surnames (p. 14 fn.) in the period covered in his dissertation. The reviewer is not aware that Śrotriya has become a surname even in 1973. Śukla, Triveda and Pāthaka were not surnames even by the end of the 12th century. They were honorifics and appellations, as has been pointed out by several scholars. Again, śilpi-goṣṭhī has been translated as "guild of stone-cutters" (p. 152). No doubt Śūlapāṇi, the engraver of the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena, was a stone-cutter, yet śilpin does not invariably mean a stone-cutter. N. C. Majumdar translates the word as an "artist" (Inscriptions of Bengal, iii, 46, 56; the author has referred to this work). Much confusion arises when Dr Sharma lumps the śūdras and saikīrna jātis (mixed castes)

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together. That careless framing of a sentence may result in a blunder is clear from this example, "Alberuni has it that the Śūdras followed the people called *Antyajas*, who rendered various kinds of services, but were not reckoned among the caste" (p. 35); he actually intends to say that Alberuni discusses the *antyajas* after the śūdras.

Dr Sharma deserves praise for assiduously collecting data, but documentation has been overdone at places. A few examples are: "loose hair flowing on the back (of a woman) has also been noticed" (p. 85), "mustard and sesamum oil were used in preparing the food" (p. 96), "sweets, curd..., whey, butter, ghee, and cheese, were all prepared from milk" (p. 97), "the Naiṣadhacharita refers to the potter's equipment of wheel and rod" (p. 141). Although one gets good description of materials used for writing, forms of marriage, dress and ornaments, food and drinks, fasts and festivals, a critical reader would seek evidence for some of his casual statements, such as, food was cheap (p. 164) and the number of satīs, devadāsīs and courtesans increased in the 11th-12th centuries (p. 174).

Commendable is the use of archaeological finds. Their relevance to the reconstruction of social history has been pointed out at many places. The selection of plates has been judicious. Interesting are the sketches of reliefs found in Rajasthan depicting "Persian wheels" (pl. xxix) and blacksmiths at work and a grocer weighing on a scale (pl. xxviii). Plate xxiii shows some women too carrying stone blocks, which implies that those north Indian women who lived by manual labour could not afford to remain within purdah. Elaborate notes on varying male hair styles and female coiffures and ornaments in different regions of northern India, evident from plates i-viii, would have been quite useful. The publishers deserve thanks for excellent reproduction of plates, but printing, though neat, is full of errors.

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B. P. MAZUMDAR

## M. G. S. NARAYANAN, Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala (Kerala Historical Society, Trivandrum, 1972). Pp. xvi + 108. Rs. 10.00.

Borrowing the term "symbiosis", a well-known phenomenon in the field of natural science, the author has presented a collection of his studies on different "religio-cultural groups" (except the Hindu) in Kerala as coexisting and "mutually beneficial" factors in the cultural complex of the state. The concept "symbiosis", however, is rather unsuitable in the context in which it is used here. While the coexistence, peaceful or otherwise, of a variety of groups in this region is clearly brought out, there appears to be no justification for describing it as "mutually beneficial".

The author describes early society in Kerala as "Dravidian", semi-tribal and as "a casteless community vertically divided into groups on the basis of topography and occupation" (p. 1). The caste system is taken to be a purely "Aryan institution", manifesting itself in this region with the coming of the Aryans. The author further associates the brāhmanical "Aryan" element with the agricultural basis of Kerala's economy, the "heterodox Aryan"

creeds like Jainism and Buddhism with its trade in general and the Semitic creeds of Judaism, Christianity and Islam with its overseas trade. While the use of the term "Aryan" with regard to the spread of brāhmanical culture (and incidentally, the caste system) in south India is unfortunate, for it raises various problems connected with the ethnic and linguistic basis of Indian culture in general and south Indian culture in particular, the characterization of the Jain and Buddhist creeds as "Aryan" indicates a certain predisposition on the part of the author as to the origin and nature of these creeds. Again, although the author sees communal conflict and class struggle as a result of waves of "Aryan" migration, he still believes that stability and social harmony were achieved because of the acceptance and dominance of brāhmanical theological ideals. The author's statement that the *Ilavas* came originally from Sri Lanka is based on mere phonetic similarity of *Ilava* to Ilam and needs stronger historical evidence.

The author covers a period of 13 centuries to substantiate his theory of "symbiosis" with selected references to the source material on different creeds and social elements which have gone into the make-up of Kerala. Chapters II-VI relate to charters and inscriptions registering royal grants to Buddhist, Jain, Jewish, Christian and Islamic institutions. These represent independent papers of the author, brought together to illustrate the coexistence of various elements. While each chapter gives details of the grants to different sects and their institutions, the author concerns himself mainly with problems of dating, reading of the texts, contents and interpretation, incidentally discussing the reasons which apparently motivated such grants and the establishment of new settlements. One wishes, however, that the author, who has laboured hard over examining several important epigraphs of different periods and from different places relating to various sects and their influence over Kerala, had given a more connected account of the pattern of historical and cultural evolution arising out of these independent but "mutually beneficial" factors.

The chief contribution of the author lies in the fresh interpretation of known evidence and in bringing to light hitherto unknown ones. While re-examining the known inscriptions he takes a position different from those of T.A. Gopinatha Rao and Elamkulam P. N. Kunhan Pillai, pioneers in the field of Kerala historical studies. The author's dating of the Pāliyam plates (A.D. 898) and attribution of Buddhist leanings to the Āy king Varaguṇa sound extremely plausible. His discussion of the date of the Silappadikāram on the basis of the identification of Kuṇavāyir koṭṭam with Tirukkuṇavāy, five miles north of Cranganore in central Kerala, and the earliest epigraphic evidence ralating to it is no doubt interesting, but the eighth-ninth century date for the epic in question is unacceptable.

The discussion on the Jewish copper plates of Cochin offers a corrective to the earlier reading of the Vatteluttu record by Hultzsch and attempts to fix the date of the record (A.D..1000) and the identity of Bhāskara Ravi Varman, the grantor, with the help of other records of the same king, particularly an inscription from Eramam, which, according to the author, has been wrongly attributed to a Kandan Kari Varman by K.A.N. Sastri and Elamkulam Kunhan Pillai. The author should, however, have vindicated his position by showing at least briefly how he arrived at the new reading of the name and date in the inscription. Instead, he merely refers in a footnote to two of his earlier articles where he discusses the question in detail (pp. 28,53).

The foundation of Kollam as a harbour and the settlement of a Syrian Christian trading corporation here are explained as being motivated by the economic and political aims of the Cera rulers Sthānu Ravi in A.D. 825 and as a set-off to the Pāṇḍya ocupation of Vilinjam, which was a coveted port on the Cera coast and in which the Imperial Colas were later greatly interested. The grants made to this new institution, including the setting up of several families of skilled workers for service to the Syrian Christian Church (Tarsapalli), are described as feudal in character. Though it was primarily a trading corporation, the extension of its rights and privileges (including tax concessions) so as to include judicial powers over the settlers would indicate its independence of the local authorities. Its participation in all activities relating to the administration of the locality would put it "on a par" with other merchant or trade organizations like Añcuvannam and Manikkirāmam (pp. 35-6). The fact that members of the trade centre were of Persian, Arabic and Israelite stocks is regarded as adequate proof of the peaceful and harmonious co-existence of the different creeds in ancient Kerala (p. 37). The advent of Islam in Kerala not as a conqueror but as an honoured guest like Judaism and Syrian Christianity (p. 39) is considered another proof of the ideal of religious tolerance in the state. Incidentally, the bilingual Muccunti mosque inscription using Vatteluttu and Arabic scripts, a rare stone inscription of the Zamorins, is datable in the 13th century (p. 40) and hence provides evidence for a date earlier than the 15th century for Islamic influence over Kerala.

The author has provided five useful appendices giving the texts with translations of the various inscriptions discussed in the book. The foot-notes are copious and leave nothing to be desired. The work, however, suffers from the absence of discritical marks.

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S. B. P. NIGAM, Sūr Vansh Kā Itihās [in Hindi] (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. viii + 489. Rs. 32.00.

The publication of this substantial volume, showing a lively reawakening in historical studies, will be welcomed by all students of medieval India, and it will not fail to fascinate those who are not normally familiar with source-materials of first-rate importance in Persian. It was a happy idea of Dr Nigam to make available for such people the verdict of contemporary and near-contemporary chronicles on the career and achievements, incidents and events, and the settings of the life of the greatest of the Afghan rulers. But the title Sūr Vansh Kā Itihās is a bit of a misnomer and somewhat misleading, for it does not indicate its real character. Of course, the word "Bhāg I" on the fly-leaf implies that it was designed as volume I, though neither in the Introduction nor elsewhere has the compiler expressly stated that the accounts of the activities of Sher Shāh and other personages of the ruling Sūr race will follow in a subsequent volume. The book is also to be judged with reference to the claim made or the criteria referred to by the writer in the "Bhūmikā". The purpose mentioned is praiseworthy, but how well, if at all, has an attempt been made to

fulfil it? The scope of the volume is indicated by the titles of the 15 chapters, all of which except the first have been named after the books cited and listed individually. A major test of such a work as this is to be found not only in what it includes but also in what it excludes, It has to be conceded, however, that except the last three chapters, which give nothing new, the selection is well made. Though the largest space of the book has been devoted to the work of 'Abbās Sarwānī, the compiler has chosen to give the pride of place in the Introduction as well as in the textual chapter to T'arīkh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shāhī.

Dr Nigam claims to be a Persian scholar, and from the qualification he possesses one would be justified in expecting from him something by way of editorial equipment. But except for his 11-page critical comment in chapter I on the nature of the various source materials included in the volume, some of which are still partly in manuscript while others are widely scattered in print, a few having been rendered in English and Urdu, he appears to be indebted to others; and his evaluation is very sketchy with little or no novelty in it. One cannot help regretting the almost total lack of foot-notes on persons, places and controversial issues. A careful and intelligent editing would have enhanced the value and utility of his Hindi version and lent weight and interest to the book by providing the readers with an exposition of policy and events and a critical appraisal and historical investigation of

controversial points and problems.

While dwelling on the importance of Daulat-i-Sher-Shāhī Dr Nigam has failed to arrive at any definite finding of his own. He has mentioned the views of two scholars who have raised doubts about the genuineness of the work, but he has neither confirmed their doubts by additional evidence nor has he rebutted them. He points out the absence of the name of Hasan 'Alī from the list of nobles given by 'Abbās Sarwānī, but adds that Ḥasan 'Alī's version receives substantial confirmation from Bada'onī. There is nothing else in favour of or against the authenticity of the work. The probability or incredibility of the story of the Rathor lady having been admitted by jagirdar Farid to his harem, the wrong mention of Monghyr in place of Sasaram and Khawaspur Tanda, and the cause of Farid's exit from his father's jagir should have been critically considered. The facsimiles of Sher Shah's farmans published in Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, were well worth consideration in connection with the chapter on Hasan 'Alī's book which tells us about the 17 farmāns of the Afghan emperor.

Waqiʻāt-i-Mushtāqī has given many facts and matters which have got a spirit of historical objectivity and are not found elsewhere. What it states about Sher Shāh's administration should have been critically examined with the aid of references in other Persian chronicles so as to see how far the system was actually in operation in the time of Sher Shāh on which Akbar is said to have reared his edifice, or whether Rizqullāh fathered what he saw or heard about the work in Akbar's time on Sher Shāh to give him credit that was not due to him. Dr Nigam has referred to the elements of incredibility in Afsāna-i-Bādshāhān and the adverse opinion of two eminent scholars about it. He could have discussed the question of its trustworthiness or otherwise, but he appears to be confused, spells "Batni" as "Patni" and fails to examine the slipshod and gross misstatements for which Kabīr's lack of historical sense, the strain that he put on his memory after a lapse of

considerable time and his grief-stricken mood were responsible.

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For lack of space the present reviewer cannot refer to all the sources utilized by the compiler. He appears to have made use of the texts of 'Abbās Sarwānī and Ni'amatullāh as reconstructed by Dr Imamuddin of the Dacca University; but he has left out the verses and made no effort to identify the names of persons and places. He has not considered the controversial question of the authorship of T'arīkh-i-Khān-i-Jahānī-wa-Makhazan-i-Afghānī. He could have referred to the three figures in the field, Ni'amatullāh, Haibat Khān of Samana and Ibrāhīm Batni. But instead of resolving the controversy, he has glossed over the issue. He has no doubt given a biographical notice of Ni'amatullāh and his father, Khwāja Ḥabibullāh, who served Akbar for full 35 years; but he could have highlighted the fact that Ni'amatullāh was a contemporary of Da'ūd Kararānī, who fell before the Mughals at Rajmahal in 1576. Thus his account of Sher Shāh was that of one as good as a contemporary as he was the nearest in point of time to the great Afghan who died in 1545, that is, about 11 years before the accession of Akbar. He, like 'Abbās, had the means to acquire first-hand information not only from his father but also from some persons who might have been alive in the time of the latter.

The eighth work in the list is  $Ma'dan-i-Akhb\bar{a}r-i-Ahmad\bar{\imath}$  by Ahmad-bin-Bahbal-bin-Jamāl Kamboh, who wrote it in 1614 and, according to Dr Nigam, arranged the episodes in chronological order and assigned dates for the events. This calls for some comment. Ma'dan, Muntakhab,  $Tabaq\bar{a}t$ , etc., all say that in the battle between Makhdum 'Ālam of Hajipur and Qutb Khān the former was killed and Sher Khān was victorious. Sher Khān was personally not present in the field and had sent only a contingent to the aid of Makhdum 'Ālam who was killed. Sometime afterwards Qutb met Sher Khān and was defeated and killed.

Again, Aḥmad has wrongly recorded that Naṣīb Shāh of Bengal, having been worsted by Sher Shāh, fled to Humāyūn who was then in Malwa. Actually, when Humāyūn was on his way to Bengal, Sultan Maḥmūd, and not Naṣīb Shāh who had died earlier, approached the Mughal emperor and induced him to hasten towards Gaur without waiting for the end of the rains to forestall Sher Khan. As has been pointed out by Mr B. P. Ambastha, the bridge at Chausa had been built by Humāyūn and not by Sher Shāh in A.H. 946, and it gave way when there was a rush of the Mughal army through it. It was from the Karamnasa river that Humāyūn was rescued by Nizām Saqqa. This and many other refreshingly new matters have received critical and careful attention of Mr Ambastha. Ahmad tells us that while Humāyūn was contemplating to cross the Ganga at Kanauj he was treacherously attacked by Sher Shah. The fact is that despite the suggestion of one of his chiefs to attack Humāyūn when he was in the process of crossing the river, Sher Shāh refrained from doing so and let the vanquished Mughal to escape. Both Ma'dan and Muntakhab write that Puran Mal of Raisin had taken to his harem 2,000 Hindu and Muslim women and this provoked Sher Shāh, the great avenger of wrongs. Actually, it was the nefarious deed of the Rajput chief of Raisin in respect of Muslim women, including some claiming descent from the prophet of Islam, which infuriated Sher Shah. The change of front may also have been politically motivated because of the strategic position of Raisin. Dr Nigam should have given some thought to this and such other questions. He could have also highlighted some good points and certain new information in Ma'dan. One such concerns the acquisition of the fort of Chunar by Sher Shāh after the rout of the Bengali general, Ibrāhīm Khān, the

son of Qutb Khān, in the battle of Surajgarh which was fought, as Mr Ambastha has contended, in 1530 and not in 1534. The mention of 'Abdur Raḥīm, the son-in-low of Jalāl Khān, who was put in charge of the fort of Rohtas, and also of the names of the 10 sons of Sher Khān by different mothers attract one's notice. It was worthwhile to examine the contents of Ma'dan and other works so as to see how far they agree with, or differ from, T'arīkh-i-Sher Shāhī of 'Abbas Sarwānī which is the standard work on Sher Shāh.

We may leave out some minor misspellings of names and terms such as "Patni" for "Batni", "Kakhur" for "Kakbur" (h for b), "Hori" for "Binnauri", and "Guzārgarh" for 'Gudārgarh" (near Pundark, 35 miles from Patna). Generally speaking, however, the Persian and Arabic words have been correctly spelt and the translation has been done well and seems to be reasonably faithful. It reads better than most of the translations in Persian. It has at the end a useful glossary of terms, a fairly exhaustive index and a short bibliography. Dr Nigam is to be congratulated for his commendable efforts to supply Hindi-knowing students and research scholars rich source-materials locked up in Persian. There existed no such printed work in Hindi. It is hoped that in the second edition it would be made more sound, full and satisfactory in method and treatment; this will enhance its utility and remove the possible misconception that the book was designed for mere popular consumption.

Patna S. H. Askari

CHINMOY DUTT, Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Indian Museum Monograph NO. 4, Calcutta, 1967). Pp. 77; 21 plates. Rs. 14.00.

Almost all the museums in the country own varying numbers of Arabic and Persian inscriptions many of which have been published individually or in groups from time to time. However, a scientifically prepared catalogue of these epigraphs is wanting in most cases.

The catalogue under review gives particulars of 53 published inscriptions belonging to the Indian Museum and ranging from 1212 to 1797. The text and English translation of each inscription along with its size, findspot, date and the journal in which it was published are given. There are some useful indices too, including one listing the types of structures whose construction is noted in the inscriptions. Among the interesting entries is an inscription dated 1728 recording the construction by Murshīd Qulī Khān of some shops in the chowk at Jahangir Nagar (Dacca). Such commemorative tablets are rather uncommon.

Seventeen of these inscriptions were brought from foreign countries; the circumstances thereof deserved being put in black and white. Most of the 36 Indian inscriptions belong to Bengal, but seven of the earliest Arabic-Persian inscriptions from Bihar are included. As pointed out in my Corpus of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions of Bihar, some of these were originally housed in the "Bihar Museum", the name given to a building of mahalla Bayley sarai at Biharsharif where A. M. Broadley, a Bengal civilian with pioneering archaeological interest, placed his collection of antiquities numbering more than a thousand. Among

the "Muhammadan antiquities" were 30 inscriptions of "great historical value"; part of this collection was transferred to the Indian Museum some time in 1895-6. The inscription of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq dated A. H. 632 whose findspot is given as "unknown" (p. 7) also belongs to Biharsharif. In 1874 Blochmann assigned this to the ruined palace of the governor of Bihar in that town and a very old estampage of it is preserved in the Patna Museum too.

Dr Dutt modestly calls it an "ad interim catalogue", midway between a guide book and a detailed catalogue for scholars. Actually, it is much more than a catalogue and a very useful compilation. As a first step in the direction of a museum-wise list of preserved inscriptions, it is most welcome. Similar catalogues of other museums will bring to light many unpublished epigraphs listed only in the stock registers and unknown to scholars generally. Like the archival catalogues, these will enable a more extensive utilization of epigraphic material by scholars in different fields.

The printing is excellent and the price, considering the quality of the paper and the 21 plates, very cheap. I wish the photographs of the remaining inscriptions were also included.

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QEYAMUDDIN AHMAD

S. B. P. NIGAM, Nobility under the Sultans of Delhi, A.D. 1206-1398 (Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968). Pp. xv + 223. Rs. 25.00.

The book represents a welcome pioneering attempt to examine an important aspect of the polity of the Delhi Sultanate as an independent subject of research. The first half (chapters II-IV, pp. 21-92) contains a general account of the changing relations between the crown and the nobility. The character, composition and service conditions of the nobility are examined in the second half (chapters V-VIII, pp. 93-180). Two of the appendices (B & C) present useful, diligently compiled statements showing the racial composition of the leading sections of the nobility during the period 1210-60, the average time taken by a beginner to rise to the position of a maqta' and the comparative position of the nobles under the Ilbarīs

The conventional dynasty-wise arrangement in the recapitulatory first half is not very satisfactory. While the rise of the Khaljīs marked the beginning of some new trends—increase and diversification in the ranks of the nobility—the same cannot be said about the rise of the Tughlaqs, as Dr Nigam himself takes note of (p.74). In fact, throughout the period the relations between the crown and the nobility followed a pendulum-like swing, alternating between a strong and capable monarch who could temporarily control his nobles and weak rulers who in turn were controlled and dominated by different factions. The pattern is fairly evident and not much progress can be made by reiterating it or, at best, adding a few more details about the one or the other trend. What needs investigation is the causes of the failure to evolve conventions or institutions to regulate the mutual

relationship. Alternatively, one could show the inevitable contradiction in the requirements of a strong centralized administration in India and the tribal origins of the Turko-Mongol polity. The author's explanation of fluctuations in crown-nobility relationship during the period suffers from the use of same points for opposite ends. To take one example, part of the credit for Fīrūz Tughlaq's peaceful reign is given to the existence of some able and devoted persons among the heterogeneous Tughlaq nobility (pp. 87-8), quarrels among whom are also made to account for the decline of the empire (pp. 90-1, 183).

The second part of the book is comparatively more substantial. In discussing the character of the nobility, the differences between the feudal system of Europe and that operating under the aegis of the Sultans are rightly underlined. Dr Nigam questions the late Dr K. M. Ashraf's classification of the nobility on the basis of occupation (p. 105) and suggests, instead, their classification into two categories: (i) "nobles by birth or hereditary nobles" and (ii) "nobles created by royal prerogative". Actually, the distinction is false, because the hereditary nobles did not exist as such; they owed their position to the king as much as others. In any case the author does not follow up his own suggestion and study the nobility on the basis of his proposed classification. Strangely, the role of the tributary zamīndārs, who are recognized as a part of the nobility (p. 118), is not examined on the specious plea that they "remotely form the subject of our study" (p. 118). In the 15th century the tributary zamīndārs were to emerge as an important political factor and a probe into their position in this preceding period was well worth attempting, nothwith standing the scarcity of source materials.

As regards the 'ulamā and their role, it should be noted that their position was qualitatively and quantitatively different from that of the "secular" nobles. For one thing, very few of them held government posts, mostly in the judicial department, and the jāgīrs held by them were not granted on condition of military or administrative service. Indeed, they were not a part of the regular nobility and owed their undoubted political influence to the theoretical position which did not visualize the state and religion as separate entities. Even so, their influence was indirect and more often than not it was unacceptable to the rulers in the face of political realities. The author should have gone into these points more deeply than he does.

Dr Nigam has used the standard chronicles to extract some new information relating to the service conditions of the nobility during the period. Works of a different kind such as the Inshā-i-Māhrā, which throws "a flood of light on the mutual relations of the nobles", have been ignored in this connection. Even the Dastār'l Albāb fi 'Ilmu'l Ḥiṣāb could be put to better use. The dynasty-wise examination of the position regarding recruitment, promotions, pay, etc., does not help, as changes in these did not coincide with dynastic changes. An attempt to seek the origins of some aspects of the service conditions in the social organization and administrative practices of the Turks during the pre-Indian phase would have been rewarding, for, as Mr Iqtidar Alam Khan has shown in a recently published article (Medieval India, A Miscellany, ii, 8-18), Turko-Mongol influences have a relevance even for the study of Mughal polity.

In a research work of this kind one expects the use of a proper system of transliteration. The printing of tājik and maqta' as tazik and muqti throughout the book is curious. The

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and other minor blemishes apart, Dr Nigam deserves credit for presenting a detailed, documented study of a subject of crucial importance in the history of medieval India.

PATNA UNIVERSITY
PATNA

QEYAMUDDIN AHMAD

U. N. DAY, The Government of the Sultanate (Kumar Brothers, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. 219. Rs. 20.00.

The book gives a general account of the position of the Sultans and the structure of the important departments of the government—revenue, army, judiciary and public works. There are two appendices: one, whose relevance is not clear, sketching the commerce and trade of India during the period and the other surveying the position of the Hindus under the Sultanate.

At the very outset Dr Day takes up the question of the character of the state and concludes rather summarily that it was a theocracy. It is difficult to share the sense of finality with which he clinches the issue and much less to accept his suggestion that "it is unnecessary to debate on this issue and it should now be taken as a closed chapter". Leaving aside the opposite views of scholars such as S. R. Sharma and K. A. Nizami, Dr Day's very brief discussion (p. 34) itself is inconsistent. Quoting Shorter Oxford Dictionary he defines theocracy as "a form of government in which God (or a deity) is recognised as the king... and his laws are taken as the statute-book of the kingdom, these laws being usually administered by a priestly order as his ministers or agents". However, ignoring this definition he argues that the existence of an ordained priesthood, which cannot be shown in the case of the Sultanate, is an outcome of theocracy and not a factor contributing to its creation.

The theoretical supremacy of the Shari'at is often pointed out as a proof of the Sultanate being a theocracy, but the fact that it was constantly violated too and, more important, that there was no sanction for the Sultanate in the Shari'at is conveniently ignored. Even a conservative writer like Baranī confesses the contradiction between the traditions of the Prophet Muaḥmmad and those of the pre-Islamic Iranian emperors. He goes on to argue that "royal government can only be carried out by following the policies of . . . the great emperors of Iran". Apart from the purely theoretical aspect, if we look at the actual position of the Hindus under the Sultanate, not only was their treatment not strictly according to the Shara' but the Sultana from Iltutmish to 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī admitted the impracticability, if not the impossibility, of their being treated as such. S. R. Sharma rightly pointed out long ago that "it is difficult to fit the state and the government under the Sultanate into any known category". It was a type by itself.

Of the departments only land revenue receives a comparatively detailed treatment, though the portion relating to 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī's reign has been entirely reproduced from the author's earlier work, Some Aspects of Medieval Indian History (New Delhi, 1971). Other departments get a very sketchy treatment (military, 18 pages; judiciary, 18 pages; and public works, 19 pages). In fact, the main shortcoming of the book is that it takes on

too much. In spite of the admitted paucity of source materials, separate aspects of the polity of Delhi Sultanate can form the subject of special studies. Two recent examples are S. B. P. Nigam's Nobility under the Sultans of Delhi, A. D. 1206-1398 (Delhi, 1968) (reviewed in this issue) and Y. M. Siddiqi's article on the office of the kotwāls under the Sultans read at the 33rd session of the Indian History Congress at Muzaffarpur. That sort of a detailed documented treatment is not possible within the space of 156 pages covering all branches of government over a period of 300 years.

The book is based entirely on the well-known general histories of the period.  $T_{WO}$  works of a different type,  $Insh\bar{a}-i-M\bar{a}hr\bar{u}$  and  $S\bar{\imath}rat-i-F\bar{\imath}r\bar{u}z$   $Sh\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}$ , have been listed in the section on sources, but surprisingly neither has been put to any use. The former is referred to only once, from a portion translated in Hindi by Athar Abbas Rizvi in Tughlaq  $K\bar{a}l\bar{\imath}n$   $Bh\bar{a}rat$ , part ii, and the latter as quoted by another writer. The  $S\bar{\imath}rat-i-F\bar{\imath}r\bar{u}z$   $Sh\bar{a}h\bar{\imath}$  has not been used at all for the section on public works, although it contains some relevant material not available elsewhere. Epigraphic evidence should not have been ignored, for it often refers to administrative designations not otherwise known. Two Tughlaq inscriptions of Bihar, for instance, mention  $H\bar{a}jib-i-Hindu\bar{a}n$  and  $Q\bar{a}z\bar{\imath}-i-Muhr-i-Kh\bar{a}s$ , but the contemporary or later chronicles do not mention these officers nor the nature of their work.

There is no evidence to maintain that the term *khitta* was not used for an administrative division or that  $iq\underline{t}a^c$  denoted some sort of a  $j\overline{a}g\overline{\iota}r$  (p. 101). In many cases the muqta (holders of  $iq\underline{t}a^c$ ) performed administrative functions too. Dr Day's assertions on the vexed question of ownership of land in ancient and medieval India (pp. 109-10) are equally unsubstantiated.

The book is moderately priced, but the printing mistakes are many and some of them rather jarring, for example, "maqtabs" for maktabs (pp. 107, 176) and "huzrat" for hujro (p. 178). Diacritical marks should have been used at least for the titles of the Persian works.

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QEYAMUDDIN AHMAD

DASHARATHA SHARMA, Lectures on Rajput History and Culture (Raghunath Prosad Nopany Lectures, 1966) (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1970). Pp. viii+167. Rs. 15.00.

The book under review contains seven lectures delivered by Professor Dasharatha Sharma, an erudite scholar of Rajasthan history, literature and culture, as the third Raghunath Prosad Nopany lecturer at the Calcutta University in April 1969. Professor Sharma succeeded in this role Professor K. R. Qanungo and Professor A. C. Banerjee who delivered their lectures in February 1956 and December 1961 respectively; these appeared as Studies in Rajput History and Lectures on Rajput History and Culture.

The origin of the Rajputs has been a complex issue, engaging the attention of and giving rise to discussion among historians right from the time of Col. James Tod. Professor Sharma's views on this problem are quite sound and reasonable. As he puts it:

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We can reject the supernatural element, if there is any. We need not also maintain that there has been no admixture of foreign blood with theirs. Some of the foreign immigrant tribes that entered India could have reached the Rajput status; in fact, this process is going even now...But there was something new in the conditions of the eighth century [the invasion of the country by the Arabs] which gave certain clans an unusual importance... [and also] scope for continued work and continuance as political units needed by the country (lecture I, p. 10).

He briefly recounts the events that brought about their historic emergence with the rise of the mighty Pratihāra empire and finds the political scene towards the close of the 12th century "rather despiriting", though "far from hopeless" (p. 15). Yet within a decade of the fateful second battle of Tarain "greater part of Northern India passed into the hands of the Muslims" (p. 16).

In his account of the Rajput struggle for survival in Rajasthan up to A. D. 1315 in lecture II Professor Sharma furnishes many relevant details from the non-Persian sources as well. In respect of one or two minor yet important details of the history of Mewar, however, he needs to be corrected. Possibly on the authority of Ferishta, duly accepted by Dr G. H. Ojha, he states the 'Alā'uddīn made over the fort of Chittor to Māldev Sonigara of Jalor "on the condition that he would consider 'Ala uddin his overlord, pay him tribute and serve him with a fixed number of horses" (p. 28). That Ferishta had mistakenly given the name of 'Ala'uddin in place of Muhammad Tughlaq is clear from the inscriptional evidence mentioning Asaduddin Arsalan as the governor of Chittor till after September 1325 (EIAPS, 1960, pp. 71-4), Nainsi's specific statement about Māldev having ruled over Chittor for seven years and another inscriptional evidence of Pausa Sudi 7 Samvat 1392/Sunday, 24 December 1335 regarding Māldev being succeeded by his son, Banbir (p. 46 fn). Professor Sharma joins issue with the late Professor Qanungo, who questioned the historicity of the much debated Padmini episode in connection with the first siege of Chittor by 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī in A. D. 1303. The reviewer, however, doubts if Professor Sharma is able to clinch the issue; perhaps the last word on the subject remains to be said.

Lecture III is mainly devoted to the reign of Maharana Kumbha, the great Rana of Mewar "who lived and fought gloriously and left a cultural legacy of which any people could be proud" (p. 78). Professor Sharma's elaborate discussion of the comparative value of evidence adduced from various primary sources for a correct estimate of important events of the reign is a major contribution to ever-growing literature on the period. His brief account of the predecessors of Maharana Kumbha from the time of Rana Hamīr, founder of the Sisodia dynasty, has one minor flaw. The acquisition of Chittor by Hamīr should be placed in A. D. 1336 instead of in A. D. 1335 as suggested by Professor Sharma, for it is unlikely that Hamīr captured the historic fort within a week of the period Banbīr is reported to have been on the throne of Mewar.

In the following lecture Professor Sharma carries the story forward up to the eve of Maharana Sāngā's accession to the throne of Mewar in A. D. 1509. In his earnestness to be fair to Maharana Rāyamalla he has given here a detailed account of his reign and taken enormous pains to determine the actual extent of the territories of Mewar at the time of

Maharana Kumbha's murder. The history of Mewar has been closely linked with that of the Rathor ruling house of Marwar since the reign of Maharana Mokal and the advent of Rao Jodhā, "the real founder of Rathor power in Rajasthan", marks the beginning of a new age in the history of the two kingdoms. Professor Sharma's account of his achievements is based on all the available sources and quite useful.

The religious trends and conditions in Rajasthan during the 12th-13th centuries form the theme of lecture V. The spirit of tolerance and freedom of worship as well as syncretic tendencies in the images and temples are shown to characterize the early Rajput period. The decline in the importance and worship of Brahmā, increasing attention to pūrta as the constitutent of dharma, growing desire for tīrthayātrā among the common people and the efforts of Haribhadra Sūri and others to save Jainism from decline are some of the other highlights of the lecture. Lecture VI gives an integrated summary of early Rajput administration, previously dealt at length by him in his books History of Early Chauhan Dynasties and Rajasthan Through the Ages.

The last lecture of this series gives details of two important sources of Rajput history, Dalpat Vilās, the only anonymous fragment of which is available in the Anup Sanskrit Library, Bikaner, was published in A. D. 1960, but has been generally ignored by researchers and historians till recently. Jodhpur rai gāmwām rī vigat was published in two volumes under the title Marwar rai pargana rī vigat during the last four years and is receiving increasing attention of scholars, but the full importance of this comprehensive gazetteer of the Marwar region, providing valuable details regarding its society, culture, economic conditions and administrative institutions along with intimate historical account and minute geographical details is yet to be duly realized. Any researcher desirous of utilizing these sources fully will find the lecture quite useful.

The publication of these lectures in book-form is most welcome, as they make available to us the results of decades of study and intensive research and throw much new light on many dark corners of the history of these eventful centuries, much of which is obscured in the haze of legendary tales owing to the paucity of authentic source material. One notes with regret the non-inclusion of a few misprints regarding years in the book in the Errata given at the end. Otherwise the book is neatly printed and well got-up.

SITAMAU (MALWA)

RAGHUBIR SINH

G. N. SHARMA, Rajasthan Studies (Educational Publishers, Agra, 1970). Pp. viii+247. Rs. 20.00.

The book under review is a compilation of 35 articles on Rajasthan history by the author published in various research journals from time to time. Prefessor Sharma claims in the preface to have revised "the contents of the articles" in some cases. Five of these articles are in the form of "notes" on some rare manuscripts, while nine of them introduce us to various other sources such as havala bahis, dastri records, byava bahis, etc., and discuss the type of information contained in them. Bhakti cult, painting, agriculture, feudalism, etc.

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are among topics covered in the remaining 21 articles. The length of the articles varies from one-and-a-half to 12 pages, most of them being from three to five pages. Many of them do not contain any references. Each article forms a separate chapter.

The articles acquainting the reader with the less known source material of Rajasthan history are the only useful and worthwhile part of the book. To the surprise of any researcher conversant with the Vamshāvalī literature Professor Sharma defines Vamshāvalis as "a kind of historical treatise" (p. 33). He refers to the institution of "kingship" in medieval Rajasthan variously as "absolute monarchies" (p. 181) and "a tribal suzerainty and strong monarchy" (p. 179). He talks of the development of bhakti cult "along the traditional modes of thought harmonious to Dharma" (p. 122) and at the same time regards it as a "rational" or "spiritual" or "intellectual" movement aimed at bringing about "Hindu solidarity" in the background of "the violence of Turkish and Mughal raids", but resulting "in bridging the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims" (pp. 123-4). Such loose and contradictory remarks characterize also his discussion of painting in medieval Rajasthan. Thus as a result of the Mughal impact on "the classical school nurtured in Mewar and Marwar" "the art of painting grew more sophisticated and individual" (p. 146); "the pictorial art of Jagat Singh's period...presents an idealistic and nationalistic (?) outlook of life" (p. 147); the "great beauty of Mewar school of painting is the primitive force of expression..." and it" is much nearer to primitive taste (?) and Hindu idealism (?)" (p. 148). The author shows little insight into agrarian institutions in his article on "Agriculture in Medieval Rajasthan" (pp. 154-61). The right to ownership of land is confused with the right to a share in its produce. The distinction among khālişah, jāgīr and bhūm is blurred; the revenue assignments are treated as proprietary rights in land and the question of ownership is evaded by using words such as "supreme control" of land, "indestructible title to the land", or "masters" of land (pp. 154-5), leaving it to the imagination of the reader to make out their meaning. Elsewhere, tracing the influence of geographical features on the "ethnic, religious and cultural" life of the people of Rajasthan Professor Sharma tells us that "the people of Rajasthan did not deviate from their inborn love for their religion and culture" and hence the Rajput princesses in the Mughal harem "followed their own way of life and religion" (p. 8). (Ironically, they showed complete immunity to their new geographical environs.) In his article "Were the Rulers of Rajasthan Zamindars?" (pp. 207-11) the author has shown complete ignorance of the institutions of zamīndārī, manṣabdārī and jāgīrdārī, essential to the understanding of medieval Indian history. He has very loosely used these terms as well as the term "nobility" without trying to understand their institutional connotations. He rightly questions the propriety of equating the rulers of Rajasthan with the zamindars who existed within their territories, but no one has done so. Had Professor Sharma carefully read Irfan Habib's chapter on "Zamindars" in his Agrarian System of Mughal India or S. Nurul Hasan's article on the "Zamindars under the Mughals", he could have saved himself this futile exercise. The article on the "Growth of Feudalism in the Early Medieval Rajasthan" (pp. 204-6) is an abstruse piece of research without a single reference to support any of the

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statements. Some of the remarks of the author deserve to be quoted in full and are reproduced below:

Feudalism, as we understand it, is a term invented by scholars of the eighteenth century. It cannot profitably be explained as a counterpart of either "aristocracy" or "nobility". The meaning of these words is limited to certain section of the peoples who enjoyed rights and privileges without owning corresponding obligations of significant nature (p. 204).

Tracing the growth of feudalism in Rajasthan Professor Sharma states:

The inscriptional as well as the literary and documentary sources lead us to believe that in some form or other there flourished the so-called feudalism right from the sixth century to our own days. It originated as a result of a long series of loosely related facts and events. Its preliminary form was something like a socio-economic political organization or institution which emerged out in order to make an end of the domination of the indigenous peoples holding their sway in scattered habitation in various regions of Rajasthan. This extraordinary circumstance makes us believe that the origin of the so-called feudalism lies in certain stages of responses and changes (Ibid).

## He adds :

This struggle between the indigenous units and the emerging authority further emphasized the necessity of the birth of a new order based on the principle where 'the few' may give protection to the peace loving classes, and at the same time bind 'the few' in a common tie of political and military adjustment. This situation further led them to demarcate the division of their respective areas, scope of their power and the nature of the province of their responsibilities. This led to a mutual understanding between the groups having diverse interest—one choosing the task of economic benefits and the other shouldering the responsibility of local defence. We know that a batch of merchants preferred to live under Shiladitya of Guhil dynasty in a hilly region of Aranyaka Giri, as evidenced by Samoli Inscription of 646 A.D. (p. 205).

The reader has to constantly strain his commonsense and imagination to make out meaning from obscure sentences and passages throughout the book. "Active action" (p. 105), "expanistic tendency" (p. 195), "non-reference" (p. 94) and "mechanical poses" are some of the examples of the type of vocabulary he has used. Abbreviations such as SBLU, JRUU, PPJ, ALB, ODRU, etc., are used without being amplified anywhere. The bibliography running into 15 pages (pp. 213-27) is a mess. The whereabouts of various manuscripts listed there are generally ignored, for example, Akhet Vernan and Bhaktamal MS (p. 218). Very often the editions of the Persian sources and of the secondary works in English and Hindi have not been mentioned. Sometimes he has mentioned all the editions known to him including the translations without specifying in the footnotes which of the manuscripts, editions or translations he is referring to. Books such as Jauhar's Tazkiralu'l-Waqi'āt have been repeatedly entered in the bibliography by slightly corrupting the name

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of the author or the title of the book (p. 222). One surely expected greater care from a scholar of Professor Sharma's qualifications and reputation in Rajasthan.

H. P. UNIVERSITY
A. R. KHAN
SIMLA

H. K. SHERWANI, Muhammad-Qulī Quib Shāh: Founder of Haidarabad (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1967). Pp. xii+150. Rs. 16.00.

The present monograph on Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh is a collection of research articles published by the author in various journals and subsequently revised and rewritten by him in the light of "recent findings". The work has two broad divisions relating to the cultural and political aspects and in nine chapters of uneven size it gives an account of the forbears of the Sultan and the cultural and political significance of his extensive reign (5 June 1580—10 December 1611) in the medieval history of the Deccan. At the end there are two useful and illuminating appendices on the proceedings of the peace conference of February-March 1596 and the Bhāgmatī legend.

Ever since its inception the Qutb Shāhī kingdom of Golkunda passed through critical periods of stress and storm. The struggle for survival continued unabated, but despite this the Qutb Shāhī rulers found time to make decisive contributions in every sphere of human activity. It may be said to the credit of Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh that he continued the tradition inherited from his ancestors. The Sultan was a great builder and lover of fine arts. Finding that the capital of his ancestors had become over-populated he founded the city of Hyderabad which excelled in planning, beauty and exuberance the most flourishing cities of the Deccan. The buildings, palaces, mosques and works of public utility in the city show marked Persian influence and the engineering skill of the builders. Some of these buildings were decorated with fine calligraphy which had attained perfection at the hands of the Persian scribes. The gardens planted around the buildings added lustre to them and the surroundings. The author has given a lengthy description of the construction of these edifices and their style and assessed the extent of success achieved in planning this new town.

Much before the accession of Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh Golkunda had become one of the centres of Dakhnī qalam. The author has no doubt referred to some of the portraits drawn by Mīr Maḥmūd and Hāshim, the two renowned painters of the Mughal court (p. 41), and mentioned that the Sultan appreciated their style and rich ornamentation, but he has not named any painter receiving patronage at the Qutb Shāhī court. This, however, does not warrant the presumption that the Sultan's interest was confined to the appreciation of art and that he did not extend patronage to the artists.

The Sultan was a man of deep learning and an unrivalled poet of Dakhnī Urdu. With great case and felicity he composed rubā'īs, maṣnavīs and ghazals which reflect the sublimity of his thoughts and the flight of his imagination. His compositions cover varied themes and he has vividly described his devotion to wine and women, appreciation of charms of

nature—seasons, gardens, parks, fruits and flowers—and Indian festivals. His writings have a deeply local flavour and yet he was not impervious to foreign influence. At the time of his accession to the throne a large number of Persians had migrated to the Deccan because they found that their mother country was not giving due recognition to their talents. Many of them settled down in Golkunda where they found the atmosphere congenial. The Sultan came into intimate contact with them. His Kullīyāt, which contains a number of ghazals, proves his interest in Persian language and literature and Persian scholars, poets, physicians and court chroniclers received support and encouragement from him. In fact, as the ruler of a multilingual region like Andhra-Telengana he felt a natural urge to extend patronage to the scholars of Telugu, Dakhnī Urdu and Persian. Professor Sherwani has aptly remarked that "Muḥammad-Qulī was to Tilang and the Deccan what Geoffrey Chaucer was to England;..." (p. 47). The contribution of some of his contemporaries in the cultural sphere has also been detailed at length.

The fifth chapter of the book deserves special attention for more than one reason. Firstly, it is entirely based on Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh's Kullīyāt which throws abundant light on the customs, festivals, ceremonies, food and drinks, and games and sports of the Hindus and Muslims alike. Secondly, it gives the lie to the theory that the relations between the Hindus and Muslims were never cordial in the medieval Deccan. Professor Sherwani's attempt to throw light on the social relations of the two communities in Telengana with the help of a single source is laudable, but this phenomenon was not peculiar to the region and obtained in other parts of the Deccan as well.

Part II of the work deals exclusively with the political aspects of the reign of the Sultan. Though he lacked the qualities of a general, he boldly stood against the neighbouring rulers. His reign opened with the unsuccessful siege of Naldurg in 1581 and closed with the unsuccessful Bastar campaign in 1611. In between he seldom failed to score against his enemies and despite heavy odds he succeeded in protecting the frontiers of his kingdom. This story of the struggle for existence in the context of the aggressive Mughal penetration into the Deccan has been narrated in the most forceful manner by the learned author. The whole account bears out the fact that the desire for security drove the Sultan to join hands with the 'Ādil Shāhīs and extend assistance to the Nizām Shāhīs against the northern Imperial power. All this, however, is merely a rehash of known material.

The account of the peace conference of February-March 1596 is a free rendering of pages 625-32 of Burhān-i-Ma'āṣir of Syed 'Alī Ṭabāṭabā'. Strictly speaking, the proceedings have little connection with Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh, but they bring out the procedure in which the negotiations for peace were conducted in those days. The Bhāgmatī legend seeks to dispel the common belief that the Sultan named the newly founded city after Bhāgmatī, a courtesan. Professor Sherwani's arguments on the basis of available historical evidence are plausible, but the Sultan's addiction to wine and women points to the authenticity of the tradition. The contention that the name of the town was Bhāgnagar and not Bāghnagar because Bāghnagar is unidiomatic and meaningless, whereas Bhāgnagar, a city of fortune, has some meaning, is unconvincing.

The book is on the whole a welcome addition to our existing knowledge of the history of medieval Deccan from a distinguished scholar and adds to our knowledge of the history

of the Qutb Shāhī kingdom. A map of the kingdom would have considerably added to the utility of the book.

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RADHEY SHYAM

N. A. SIDDIQI, Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals (1700-1750) (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1970). Pp. x+183. Rs. 20.00.

The land revenue system of the Mughals has been engaging the attention of historians ever since the early 20th century. The works of W. H. Moreland and P. Saran may be regarded as pioneer studies in this field. Besides Moreland, Yusuf Ali, S. R. Sharma and I. H. Qureshi have written articles on the subject on the basis of contemporary chronicles. Numerous research papers on its various aspects based on archival documents have been penned and published by Nurul Hasan, Satish Chandra and B. R. Grover in the last few years. These and Irfan Habib's Agrarian System of Mughal India have superseded the work done by Moreland in many respects. Important work on the regional aspects of the problem is also being done by several scholars.

The late Dr Noman Ahmad Siddiqi's book is a valuable addition to the studies on the subject. This is based on the doctoral thesis of the author submitted to the Aligarh Muslim University in 1959 and covers the period when the Mughal empire began to disintegrate and headed towards its final collapse. The source-material used in the book mainly comprises the chronicles, dastāru'l-'amals, Allahabad documents of the 18th century and the early British revenue records. However, the author has not drawn upon the huge mass of archival sources pertaining to various regions and in consequence failed to notice the developments which took place in different parts of the Mughal empire. He himself concedes in the Introduction that he has taken up only the broad features and basic uniformity of the administrative practices without going into the regional patterns (p. 2). But it is very doubtful if without the analysis of the regional practices and variations it is at all possible to make out a general picture of the land revenue system under the Mughals during the 18th century.

Dr Siddiqi analyses in the first chapter (pp. 8-20) the classification of villages, types of peasants, their condition, rights and relation with the zamīndārs. The main features of the zamīndārī institution, various categories of the zamīndārs and taʻaluqdārs and the position, rights, perquisites, functions and duties of the zamīndārs are discussed in the second chapter (pp. 21-40). The author's account of the position and rights of the village zamīndārs is instructive and valuable. He has not only maintained that the zamīndār had proprietary rights in land, but also brought out the zamīndār's role in the development of agriculture in his village and the fact that the zamīndār identified his interest with those of other riʿāya and cultivators and was a well-integrated member of the village society. As regards the taʻaluqdārs, he has mainly relied on the late 18th century British records supplemented by the Mirā't-i-Aḥmadī, a work of the second half of the 18th century, and not gone into the details of the evolution of taʻaluqdārī system with provincial variations, as done by Grover.

There is an interesting discussion of the magnitude of land revenue demand under three different heads namely māl, jihāt and sā'ir-i-jihāt in chapter III (pp. 41-59). The author has ascertained the percentage of produce realized from the peasants over and above the māl. He thinks that under Akbar in the areas where crop-sharing and kankūt prevailed different rates with provincial variations could be charged, though one-half of the produce was the maximum. According to him, no change in the share fixed as mal was introduced by any of the successors of Akbar. He puts jihāt taxes at five per cent. of the amount shown as māl and sā'ir-jihāt taxes at 15 per cent. of the aggregate amount shown as māl-o-jihāt. This means that the collections in addition to the mal amounted to more than 20 per cent and a little less than 21 per cent. His inference is based on the assessment account contained in the dasturu'l-'amals. The methodology adopted by Dr Siddiqi to work out the incidence of land revenue demand category-wise is an advance upon the general statements of More. land and Irfan Habib. Better equipped than these writers to arrive at a more precise calculation of the land revenue demand, he has definitely made a contribution in this respect. However, the generalization of the author on the basis of assessment account of one village, Ganeshpur, mentioned in the draft of a dasturu'l-'amal cannot be regarded as reliable because the incidence of taxation had considerable regional variations based on various factors. Had the author consulted the original pargana and village revenue records available for the 17th and 18th centuries at the Rajasthan Archives, Bikaner, he would have arrived at more scientific conclusions. His description of the methods of assessment is definitely more informative than what is available from the previous writings. On the basis of the 18th century sources he has given details of the hast-o-bud, kankut, bhaoli, 'amal-i-khewat, 'anal-i-jinsī, sarbasta and tashkhīs-i-naqdī methods of assessment.

The working of land revenue (administrative) machinery is set forth in chapter IV (pp. 60-101). One aspect covered in this respect in detail is the working of the *ijāradārī* system at the pargana and village levels. It is useful for a general understanding of the working of the *ijāradārī* system. All the same his assumptions that the effect of the widespread practice of *ijāra* on the *zamīndārs* and the peasants was ruinous and that it gave rise to a new class of bankers and speculators leading to the breakdown of the administrative machinery at the pargana level are not applicable to all the regions of the Mughal empire in the first half of the 18th century.

The author's discussion of the division of land revenue in chapter V (pp. 102-34) does not contain any fresh information and generally corroborates known facts. The working of the system of jagīrdārī and the institution of madad-i-ma'āsh under the weak control of the central government is, however, satisfactorily delineated. He has also ably discussed the nature of the crisis of the jāgīrdārī system during the first half of the 18th century along with its administrative and agrarian implications.

While these aspects of the work are very significant for a proper understanding of the land revenue system under the Mughals during the first half of the 18th century, some of its defects are too glaring to be ignored, especially since they seem to arise from either deliberate oversight or ignorance of the later researches on the subject. The picture drawn by the author of the village and the peasants is rudimentary and sketchy. He has completely ignored the concept of village community in Mughal India and the role of muqaddam in the

village. His contention that the peasants did not enjoy the right to sell or mortgage the land is not tenable. His very definitions of the terms peasant, asami and risaya are not correct. According to the author, the peasant "signifies the cultivator, who, regardless of his having enjoyed or not enjoyed occupancy rights, did not have the right either to sell or mortgage the land tilled by him. Such a cultivator in the Persian chronicles and documents is described as mazara, asāmi or rifāya" (p.10). All these technical terms have already been explained by Grover and Nurul Hasan. It is difficult to accept his definition of the ra iyati villages in which, according to him, "the peasants or ryots did not engage for the land-revenue", paid the share in the produce in accordance with the agreement with the zamindars and the increase or decrease in land revenue was the concern of the latter (pp. 146-7). The author has associated the term mālik only with the zamīndār excluding others such as muqaddams and rifaya-i-khud-kāsht. He has also associated the term asāmi with the kāshtkārs who did not enjoy any transferable rights of property in land (p. 148). All this is a very doubtful hypothesis, for the term asami was equally applicable to other revenue paying agriculturists such as muqaddam, zamīndār, etc. The author's categorization of peshkashī zamīndārs on the basis of their jurisdiction over a sarkar, an entire pargana or a large number of villages and petty zamindārīs comprising a few villages (p. 24) is too arbitrary and vague. His view that the sarkar zamīndārs were autonomous chiefs is not true in all cases during the Mughal age. In fact, the extent of territories held by the autonomous chiefs cannot be identified with such a rigid territorial conception. His assertion that the term zamindar has been so far confined to the vassal chiefs (p. 28) is not at all correct; the wider scope and connotation of the term is well-established already. On the whole the author has done well in carrying forward the work on agrarian system during the first half of the 18th century when owing to the laxity of the central administration the jagirdari and ijāradārī systems underwent a change in their working so as to have an impact on the condition of the peasantry. The book has been well brought out.

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DILBAGH SINGH

ATUL CHANDRA ROY, A History of Mughal Navy and Naval Warfare (World Press, Calcutta, 1972). Pp. xiv+161; 3 maps. Rs. 20.00.

The book provides a brief but systematic account of the Mughal navy and its exploits in seven chapters. Starting with the naval traditions in India inherited by the Mughals, the author recounts the organization of the Mughal navy by Akbar, the ship-building activities at various centres of the empire, especially Bengal, the different types of vessels that were constructed, the naval strategy and wars in the east for over half a century from 1610 onwards leading to the extension and consolidation of Mughal rule in Bengal and Assam and the story of the Mughal fleet on the western coast. The reader, however, gets no adequate answer to the crucial question why the Mughals failed to develop a navy which could match in strength the European.

The reviewer is inclined to attribute this largely to the absence of much-needed among most Mughal sovereigns. Humāyūn, for example, failed to realize

the usefulness of an armed navy and burnt the naval fleet of Bahādur Shāh after he captured Cambay. It is surprising to find the author describing Humāyūn, in the face of this evidence, as the pioneer and founder of the Mughal navy (pp. 21-2). Humāyūn's engagement with Sher Shāh at Chausa can hardly be regarded as "naval war". Even when an attempt was made to have a semblance of naval fleet in the time of Aurangzeb, the initiator was Mīr Jumla, a merchant turned administrator. Mīr Jumla knew from his experience of Indian Ocean trade that security of commercial interests depended on armed naval strength against possible European intrusion. But even he failed to bring about a lasting change and the European naval supremacy remained unchallenged.

The Mughals also lacked the necessary human material for European-style warships. The European gunners and crew possessed the theoretical knowledge and practical skill to fire with accuracy and manoeuvre their ships. Since formal education was denied to low-caste people in India, the Indian crew never developed the necessary expertise. This explains why Indian navies preferred to employ Europeans as gunners and technical personnel on the ship. The Wazīr of Aurangzeb grasped the truth, for he is quoted by the author as saying that the Mughals could not create a European-type navy because of "lack of men to direct it" (p. 141). Moreover, the European ships were infinitely better armed. They carried more and heavier guns which could be fired in different directions.

The author's evaluation of the role of the Malabaris, who challenged the Europeans on the high seas for more than two centuries, is sketchy and inadequate. No evidence has been cited to substantiate the contention that "possibly voyages to Mecca for pilgrimage were forbidden by Akbar's famous decree of 1570" (p. 29). Again, his statement that coconut ropes "were mainly imported into India from the Maldive islands" is untenable; coir was available in abundant quantities on the western coast and there could be no question of its import.

Numerous typographical errors greatly detract from the merit of the book. The index is inadequate for a research monograph. The bibliography should have been enlarged and made more comprehensive. Among omissions mention may be made of Banaji's book, Bombay and the Sidis, S. H. Askari's article (who incidentally contributes a foreward to the book) "Mughal Naval Weakness and Aurangzeb's Attitude towards the Traders and Pirates on the Western Coast" and A. Jan Qaisar's paper, "Shipbuilding in the Mughal Empire during the Seventeenth Century".

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SURENDRA GOPAL

LAJWANTI RAMA KRISHNA, Panjābī Ṣūfī Poets (Ashajanak Publications, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. xi+162. Rs. 22.50.

Panjabi is one of the 10 major Indo-Aryan languages which emerged from the Prakrit and Apabhramśa phases at about the advent of the Muslims from the north-west and rapidly developed into a literary language. The first phase, the Nāth Jogī period (c. A. D. 900-1200), was followed by three centuries of cultural changes in which the Muslim mystic played an important part. They increasingly used the regional language and adopted the

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idioms and speeches of the common people to propagate their faith. The mystic literature of the Muslims produced largely in Persian, if carefully examined, is sure to yield fruitful evidence of the use and growth of the regional languages. The compiler of the Malfaz significantly records that when Amīr Khusraw was sent by 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī to Hazrat Sharfuddīn Qalandar, who was living the life of a recluse at Panipat but had a great hold over the masses, there was an exhange of impromptu poetical effusions in Persian, but little conversational speech. Khusru pheri kotara, asked the saint, and the sight of the poet visibly moved on hearing the verses uttered off-hand by the former drew the remark, munda hunh bujhandha hunh. The utterances of Suhrawardi saints of Uch, Rasulabad and Butuwa (Ahmedabad) in Panjabi have also come down to us. The end of the 15th century witnessed the beginning of the age of devotion, which was characterized by the bhakti movement on the one hand and Ṣūfīsm on the other and continued up to the end of the 19th century. This is the period covered by the book before us.

We welcome this study by a Panjabi lady of about a dozen Muslim mystic poets of the Panjab, known and unknown, big and small, who flourished during these four centuries and wrote in the regional language. Regional history of cultural development, especially in the field of religion, language and literature, should have an interest not only for the general reader, but also for those interested in a comprehensive history of India. Mrs J. N. Madan, originally Miss Lajwanti Rama Krishna, is to be commended for salvaging and making use of a variety of materials from different sources such as unseen and unnoticed manuscripts, printed poems and pamphlets, qawwali songs, oral traditions (acknowledged by the writer to be mostly of doubtful value and hence "utilized...with great care") and works in English on history, religion and literature of Panjab and for selecting with discernment the relevant extracts, giving them a fairly faithful rendering in English and commenting upon the literary characteristics of each poet in respect of language, style and religious tenets.

This handsomely got-up, neatly printed and nicely bound small volume consists of lo chapters, of which the first eight deal with poets beginning with Shaikh Farīd, a direct descendant of the celebrated 13th century Chishti saint, H. Farīduddīn Shakar Ganj, and ending with an obscure poet, Karam 'Alī. Of these Bullhe Shāh (A. D. 1680-1758) has been taken to be the greatest. The remaining two chapters relate to a few minor poets and some poets of the 19th century. There are besides conclusion an appendix on Hīr-Rānjhā story and a two-page bibliography of only English works, not a single Persian or Urdu book being cited. Here and there in the footnotes we get bare mention of a few Persian and Urdu works, but all the more reliable and standard works are conspicuous by their absence from the reference list.

The book opens with a brief but sympathetic foreword by the well-known European orientalist, Mr A. C. Woolner, and a small preface. Going through these, one was disposed to think that the book not only covered new ground but was a definitely valuable contribution to an important phase of the cultural history of our country. The idea received some support especially from Mr Woolner's remark, "In this book Truth is the ideal pursued along the dusty tracks of research by a Pañjābī woman" (p. viii). We wish we could agree. Though presumptuous, we must express our difference.

Islamic mysticism or Taşawwuf, popularly called Sūfīsm, is not, as its ending "ism" indicates, a dogmatic creed or a doctrinal faith; it is not a religion but a method and spirit and one of the ways of life to satisfy the longings of the human soul for a direct approach to. knowledge of and union with the ultimate reality, i.e., God. It is an art of finding God in oneself through certain spiritual experiences. Mystical thoughts and experiences or inner illuminations are widespread and a common meeting-ground of all faiths. They are not confined to Islam but are found everywhere, in all religions and were the same throughout the world in all the ages. Sufism is not a sect in Islam, but only a philosophical and spiritual aspect of the faith of the Arabian prophet and may be taken to represent an attempt to raise the principles of Islam to a higher plane of knowledge and love of God. The writer of the book would, however, have us believe that Sūfīsm should be looked upon as a rigidly organized sect within Islam. She ought to have known that there are no dogmas in it organized into a religious system; it manifests itself in different shapes with different people and there are divergent tendencies in it according to the spirit of the teachings of the distinguished founders of the different schools. Asceticism and quietism were predominant among some; speculative, theosophical and pantheistic thoughts were the prevailing notes among others. Most of them believed in living in the world but being out of it, while some were so drawn to or attracted by divine grace that they renounced all worldly concerns, Some concealed their devotion, made no parade of anything good and hid nothing bad; they were called Malamatis.

Islam like other Semitic religions, Judaism and Christianity, believes in the absolute separation of the Creator from the creation. Among Indian religions Hinduism believes in the identity and fusion of the creations with the Creator. The Hindus believe, says a writer, "that all created things are only particles of the Divine Mind, and all things will eventually rest in, or gain beatitude by absorption back into, the Deity". As for Buddhism, there is no room in it for God and its fundamental tenets centre in the idea of the individual's growth and progress, by stages, towards perfection by the attainment of beatitude. Admittedly, there are similarities on the question of one and many and the pantheistic elements in the Wujudia school of the Sūfīs, whose motto is hamaūst or everything is Him, are to be distinguished from the Shududia school, which lays stress on the idea implied in hama azust, i.e., everything is from Him. Some of the practices of the Jogis and certain parallel philosophical and practical aspects of the Sūfī disciplines appear to be the echoes of the Vedāntic or Buddhistic or even of the neo-Platonic and Christian ideas and practices. But points of contact, however striking, need not lead one to father the system of one on to the other, unless positive and definite proofs are available of conscious borrowing by one from the other. The categorical statements of Mrs Madan regarding the influence of Persian religion and Indian thought, both Buddhist and Hindu, on Sūfīsm betray lack of elementary caution. The Ṣūfī preachers responsible for the peaceful penetration of Islam had never abjured their faith when they wrote or spoke about the universality of love and when they opined, as does Jāyasī in Akhrāvat, Bidhna ke marg hain tele; sarag nakhad rowall jete. The Persian poet, Sā'ib, also wrote in the same strain:

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Gustgū-i-Kufr-o-dīn ākhir ba yak jā mī kashad; Khwāb yak khwāb ast amma mukhtalif ta bīr hā. (All talks of infidelity and faith converge in the end on one point. Dream is one but the interpretations of the dream are many.)

Sympathetic study of the religions of others and assertion of the conviction that there is truth in every religion and also acceptance of some of the ideals and practices of the Indian religions did not mean loss or relaxation of faith in Islam and falling victim to the charms of Hinduism. Who could be a greater and more orthodox Muslim than Mirza Mazhar Jān Jānān and yet his words and utterances are replete with ideas essentially Indian and imbued with the philosophical and practical aspects of Hinduism. Much has been made of some of the utterances of Bullhe Shāh who has been described in a hyperbolic language as "one of greatest Ṣūfīs of the world" and whose thought has been put on a level of equality with that of Jalāluddīn Rūmī and Shamsī Tabrz of Persia (p. 60). We are told that his pantheistic thought was accompanied by its allied doctrines of reincarnation and karma. Rūmī has been fortunately spared, although he speaks of many existences Haft ṣad haftād qālib dāda am, ham-chu sabza bār-hā Ruʾida am (I have experienced 770 existences and I have grown so many times like the blades of grass).

It must not be forgotten, however, that the Ṣūfī conception is quite unlike that of the Hindus, for they refer to ascent only and not to descent. They refer first to the mineral world in regard to the existing matters and take this to be at the lowest level; then they go up to the vegetable world; further they rise to the animal world; and finally they come to the human beings and the progress of their souls till they cast off all the mundane trappings and attain or become merged in the One Absolute.

There are certain other limitations in the accounts of the individual poets chosen by the writer and many points on which it may be permissible to differ from her. She, however, deserves acknowledgement and even praise and congratulations for discharging her labour of love with painstaking care, for breaking new ground by bringing at one place all that was scattered and largely unnoticed, for stimulating interest in an important subject and suggesting desirable future research in it. As it is, this exceedingly readable book is bound to be very popular with general readers and laymen and students of Panjab.

PATNA

S. H. ASKARI

TARA CHAND, History of the Freedom Movement in India (Publications Division, Government of India, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. viii+527; xii+593. Rs. 35.50.

With the publication of the last two volumes the *History of the Freedom Movement in India* written by the eminent historian Professor Tara Chand has been completed. The first two volumes had prepared the stage for the interplay of events which ultimately triumphed in wresting power from the British and regaining freedom for the country. The third volume brings the story from Curzon's partition of Bengal to the close of the first non-violent non-co-operation movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920. The first chapter discusses the state of politics in Great Britain and its international position in the first half of the

present century and throws light on the gradual decay of imperialism which facilitated the declaration of India's freedom in 1947. The next two chapters analyse the economic condition of India and highlight the stagnation which was evident on all sides. The author infers that the condition of rural workers deteriorated so that the bleak existence and miserable plight of great number of their countrymen naturally roused the indignation of the intelligentsia and added fuel to the fire of discontent and anti-British feeling. On the basis of statistics the author has concluded that while the per capita value of agricultural product was falling the "per capita income from industry and commerce was slowly rising". As a natural consequence in the first half of the 20th century the great majority of the people of India, viz., those dependant on agriculture were becoming progressively impoverished, while the small number of those deriving their livelihood from industry, trade and certain services were enjoying increasing income. The author describes the impact of this economic reality in the sphere of politics in these words:

The masses groaning under their misery sought some means of relief from hunger, fear and thraldom. The classes needed mass support to bring pressure upon Government for the removal of grievances....The middle class...extended their influence among their countrymen—urban and rural, intensified national solidarity and helped to build up the force of public opinion and to organize the instruments for carrying on the struggle (pp. 126-7).

This is an objective assessment of the impact of economic forces on the national movement. The author has probed the minds of the leaders of the Hindus and Muslims and attempted to discover the factors which divided them and made joint action to win independence, on which demand "almost all factions and parties" agreed, impossible. The fourth and most valuable chapter entitled "The Philosophical Background" reviews the ideas of the four great leaders on the non-Muslim side, namely Tilak, Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo Ghosh, whose thought in the fields of morality, society and politics helped to create public opinion and had tremendous impact on the trend of the national movement. All these leaders prized non-violence and although neither Tilak nor Aurobindo Ghosh ruled out force as an instrument of struggle against foreign domination, their emphasis was throughout on non-violent action. Ghosh was an ardent advocate of passive resistance and gave a call for complete independence long before the Congress had resolved on it. The author's sympathy with the thought of Tagore and Gandhi is manifest throughout. He rightly emphasizes the twofold aspect of India's freedom fight. It was a "struggle to end domination and rule of a foreign power. But essentially it was a moral struggle". Gandhi's satyagraha was not a "sterile effort" and Gandhi's swaraj meant the breaking of the chains which bound the minds of men. These chains consisted of fear, selfishness, distrust, cowardice and vices of various kinds.

The author has discussed in two chapters Muslim thought and the Muslim problem which called for solution. He finds great similarity in the basic ideas of Ram Mohan Roy and Syed Ahmad Khan who stood for "supremacy of reason in religious, moral and social affairs" (p. 227). But soon "reason's supremacy began to recede, feeling began to take its place in men's esteem. Faith assumed domination over intellect and criticism of religion was deprecated" (p. 228). In this sway of emotionalism developed the irreconcilability be

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tween the Hindus and the Muslims which dominated the growth of nationalist movement in the present century and prepared the soil for separatism. The person who contributed most to the accentuation of differences and diversities was Muhammad Iqbal. His "impetus to emotionalism" led to "a paralysis of clear thinking in politics and an upsurge of unreason leading to violence" (p. 247). His emphasis on the "uniqueness of Islam and Islamic civilization" and "exclusive reliance upon the factor of religion" made "political accommodation with other communities almost impossible" (Ibid). Yet the author doubts if Iqbal "contemplated the partition of India and the establishment of a sovereign Muslim state" (p. 252). All that he proposed in 1930 was the creation of an autonomous region of Muslim majority in the north-west, "possessing full opportunity of development within the body politic of India" (p. 253). Another Muslim thinker, Maududi, totally rejected the idea of the Hindus and Muslims unitedly living in a state with democracy and secularism as its basis. But there were many others who did not subscribe to separatism and were staunchly upholding the principle of united India, free from foreign domination and democratic in its structure.

In the chapter entitled "The Muslim Problem" the author has critically analysed the circumstances prompting the initiation of the scheme of separate electorates for the Muslims and the emergence of the Muslim League. It is clear from his study that both these were the contrivance of the government to counter the anti-Bengal partition agitation and Minto was primarily responsible for the mischievous formula. Unfortunately, except the Amrit Bazar Partika no nationalist journal or leader at the time gave close attention to it. Minto was happy that he had pulled back the Muslims from joining the opposition and the Muslim leaders, whose complexion was entirely bourgeois, were pleased at this recognition of their separate identity. The events, both national and international, in the next decade led to the convergence of the two communities to a certain identity of interests. The Khilafat movement brought them on the same platform and Gandhi launched the non-co-operation programme, tacking "the objective of swaraj to that of Khilafat" (p. 417) Permanent Hindu-Muslim unity was the purpose of Gandhi in thus identifying the national movement with the Khilafat agitation which was of a temporary nature. But when he withdrew the non-co-operation movement before the Khilafat question had been settled, the relations between the two communities were badly affected. The author holds that the "causes of communal antagonism were deep" and without a transformation of the "social, economic and political organization of the Indian society" these could not be eliminated. But the process of harmony was obstructed and slowed by the presence of the third party, the British rulers. The struggle for freedom was not halted, but its path was blocked by the growing hostility of the Muslims and increasing cry for separatism marked by the resurgence of communal dissensions.

In the author's opinion British policy in the first two decades of the present century showed no sympathy for Indian aspirations or willingness even to allow colonial self-government. The fiddling with constitutional changes was merely with the object of ensuring permanence of British rule in India. But political consciousness in the country was growing, conomic factors were fanning discontent and the people were reluctant to repose faith in ritish promises and pretences. The Reforms of 1919 were doomed to failure, as the bureau-acy also had no faith in them. The increasing disaffection found expression in the

non-co-operation movement, which failed to curb the will of the government and could not strictly adhere to the path of non-violence. Its withdrawal cast a gloom but it had brought immense gains, the most prominent of which were the general awakening of the masses to their political rights, the total loss of faith in the government and the spirit of self-reliance. Temporary setback could not deviate the national movement from the ideal set by Gandhi, which was an "ordering of human affairs on the basis of truth and non-violence"—a society in which "all exploitation of man by man ceases" (p. 150). With this note the third volume ends.

The fourth volume "depicts the most active phase of the freedom movement" in the last 25 years before 1947. The conflict between British imperialist interests and the Indian demand for self-realization and freedom is sharply brought out in 12 chapters. Based on contemporary official documents, private papers of British officials, biographies, memoirs and writings of Englishmen and Indians, the book is the first clear and exhaustive treatment of the national movement which brought freedom to India. An important contribution of the author is the analysis of Muslim demand for partition and of the forces and circumstances which contributed to the division of India into two independent and perhaps warring states. As he states:

After 1858 politicization of the Indian mind began in a milieu which was dominated by religious slogans and guided by sectarian beliefs and customs. The policy of the British rulers was to accentuate the biases of their subjects so as to widen their differences.

For, "the consolidation of the Indian people into a single nation was against the imperial interests". Hence disparities were emphasized and group consciousness encouraged by the rulers. Not only was the division between the Hindus and Muslims highlighted, but even the clash of interests between the brahmins and non-brahmins and upper castes and depressed classes among the Hindus was exploited. In these circumstances the struggle for self-government was an endeavour to "bridge the gulf which divided the communities and castes" and the story of the national movement, whose aim was to win freedom from domination, unfortunately is that "of the attempts at political unification of communities". In this process while the modern economic forces helped progress towards the objective, the "persistence of medieval notions of religion, social order and customs...encouraged by the selfish interests of British Government" retarded the pace. However, in the present century the resurgence movement made rapid strides despite the recurrent obstructions by the foreign government whose concessions of constitutional reforms in 1909 and 1919 were directed towards deepening the differences among communities and emphasizing "the vicious theory of two nations". "Self-determination was left to the hazards of reconciliation of the antagonistic parties", which British diplomacy prevented. The pressure of the movement of civil disobedience, growing disaffection of the people and decline in the international position of the United Kingdom compelled the British to relinquish India, but not before partitioning it into two independent states.

The most prominent architect of the freedom movement was Mahatma Gandhi. His approach was radically different from that of the educated middle class Indians who controlled the Congress and who "were too much enamoured of parliamentarianism and

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offices". Throughout these years of conflict with the British government Gandhi's movement of civil disobedience was misunderstood and exploited by the politicians for their purposes and it was in the fight for seats and offices that divergence between the Hindus and Muslims grew and the British rulers employed their Machiavellian tactics to aggravate it. The constitutional reforms from 1909 to 1935 accentuated the communal rift and the author's analysis of Muslim politics leads him to the inevitable conclusion that Pakistan was more the consequence of British intrigues than of Muslim fervour for it. British statements fully confirm this view. Jawaharlal Nehru was unable to place his feet on reality and appreciate Muslim aspirations in his programme of economic revolution and Gandhi's plea for "moral transformation of the Hindus and Muslims" failed to appease the Muslim League. The British exploited the situation for their ends and when it became impossible for them to continue their domination over India they declared independence by dividing the country.

The Muslim League under Jinnah was initially co-operative and in his speeches before the elections he stood for "full national self-government", "complete freedom", "unity and honourable settlement between Hindus, Moslems and other minorities". But Nehru's refusal to let the League participate in the UP cabinet except by merging its identity with the Congress created a new crisis. Jinnah's attitude towards the national demand stiffened and the path was cleared for the Pakistan Resolution. The rift widened in 1937 and Jinnah became the sole leader of the Muslims enjoying the favour and support of the government, which, alarmed by the electoral success of the Congress, "refurbished its armour" and sought to conciliate the Muslims and use them and other "fissiparous factors" such as the scheduled castes, non-brahmins and princes as a counterpoise against the Congress. The British now depended upon the Muslims and gave them a veto on constitutional progress. With this power Jinnah felt he could "command whatever he wished". The substantive cause which made the demand for Pakistan effective was the will of the British rulers. "They implanted the seeds of Muslim separatism, they nurtured the growth of the plant and they finally brought it to fruition".

The Quit India movement turned into a violent revolt because of the premeditated repression by the government which left the people leaderless. The results of the movement, however, were beyond expectation. It removed the illusion of the British that the "empire was morally justified, that its beneficence... was recognized by the Indian masses". The "moral foundation" had been knocked out and, as the author puts it, "Churchill and company were reluctantly obliged to realize that... they had to quit". At the same time the method of civil resistance seemed to have made its utmost contribution and exhausted its utility. The nationalists felt the need of revising the method and the urge for violence as the weapon of struggle for freedom grew. This was most glaringly demonstrated in the attitude of the Muslim League which became increasingly intransigent. The failure of the Cabinet Mission plan and the mounting wave of violence in Bengal and Panjab made it clear that India could not remain united, for by that time Jinnah's concept of Pakistan had assumed the form of a completely independent sovereign state having no truck of any kind with Hindu India. Mountbatten's appointment with full powers to negotiate and decide the constitutional problem hastened the achievement of this purpose. The new

viceroy won over Nehru by his "charm and advocacy", "aided by the valuable support of Lady Mountbatten". Patel and other Congress leaders, except Gandhi and Azad, were reconciled to the inevitable and independence was tagged with the partition of India Mountbatten was to a large extent responsible for giving concrete shape to the vague aspirations of Jinnah. The end of the struggle for freedom brought no comfort to Gandhi. He was not in Delhi on the day of independence. The author brilliantly sums up his position in these words:

He loved freedom, but he valued truth, compassion, righteousness and non-violence more. For him independence and self-government were not identical with power, but with power under the control of virtue and morality. The independence which India achieved on August 15, 1947, left a void and caused a severe heartache. It had been won by sacrificing the ideal of national unity, by surrendering to communal passion, by succumbing to fear and hate, for the sake of power regardless of its end.

The tale of freedom has been dramatically told in these monumental volumes, which will remain an abiding contribution to the literature on the history of freedom movement in India. The author has been remarkably thorough and objective in his approach.

Allahabad Bisheshwar Prasa

R. L. SHUKLA, Britain, India and the Turkish Empire, 1853-1882 (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. xvi + 262; 5 maps. Rs. 30.00.

Indian governments have ever been sensitive to developments in Western and Central Asia and their foreign policy has been oriented accordingly. From the beginning of the 19th century, when Napoleon invaded Egypt and sought to lead his forces against the British in India through the regions lying within the Turkish and Persian empires, the British government in England and their subordinate government in India became involved in the "Turkish question" to protect the shortest route from the west and to induct their commercial interests there. Turkey and Persia had simultaneously attracted the attention of the French and the Russians, the two imperial rivals of Great Britain. But it was mainly the Russian danger which prompted British interest in the Eastern Question and gave direction to the British policy of resuscitating the Sick Man of Europe.

Dr Shukla has commenced his story with the crisis of 1830-3 when the Pasha of Egyprojected his arms eastwards to undermine the integrity of the Turkish empire by separating Syria and the Arab lands from it. The Russians moved westwards and based the armed might, men and ships, on the Bosphorus. In this move one finds a clear exposition of the Czarist government's policy to dominate the eastern Mediterranean, control the Balkans and seek an exit into the warm waters of the Persian Gulf. Throughout the least century these ambitions were consistently pursued by Russia. Russia's presence in West Asia, however, signalled danger to the British imperial interests and aspirations in the east Their route to India was menaced and their predominance in Arabian waters was three tened. The British had built up a system of naval defence and supremacy in this region by

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their treaties with the so-called Trucial Chiefs which gave to the Royal Navy a right and reponsibility of guarding peace in the Persian Gulf. To retain their position of superiority the British hung on to the protection of the Porte, whose sway over the Arab lands had to be safeguarded against all intrusions, whether of Muhammad Ali pasha of Egypt or of any European imperial powers. This would explain the British intervention in the crisis of 1830. As Palmerston proclaimed, "The integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire are necessary to the maintenance of the tranquillity, the liberty and the balance of power in the rest of Europe". The Crimean war of 1854-6 was fought to uphold this principle; it also underlay the British intervention in the Balkan crisis of 1876-8 which culminated in the Berlin treaty and the cession of Cyprus to the British by Turkey. The author believes, not without substance:

...the foundations of British policy in the Near and Middle East were laid in the 1830's, when India entered into European diplomacy as a major issue. The Levant crisis revealed that Britain would not tolerate any interference with her routes to India and would actively intervene in the states flanking India if the 'avenues' to her empire were threatened (p. 12).

In his second chapter Dr Shukla has ably reviewed the impact of the Crimean war on the policy and strategic thinking of the Government of India and the India House. There can be little doubt that imperial interests in India were a major factor in British involvement in the war against Russia on behalf of Turkey. And in the context of this conflict the complexion of dangers to India and the mode of neutralizing them were considered at the moment in both England and India. There were proposals for military intervention in Baghdad and the Euphrates valley to prevent Persia, then friendly to Russia, from occupying an important position on the Persian Gulf. The Government of India was commissioned to make naval demonstrations in the Gulf to keep Teheran quiet. Also at this time efforts were made to establish amicable relations with the Amir of Afghanistan and the Treaty of 1855 was concluded to block any possibilities of Russian political influence in that quarter. Central Asia was also not ignored and the chief of Khokand was wooed. Indian troops were not involved in the war, but political action was taken to stop Russian influence from spreading into the regions in close proximity to India. The contemporary political situation in India was none too happy for the British. The contiguity of Russia might have worsened this and made a lot of difference to the outcome of the Revolt of 1857. Dr Shukla thinks that British interest in the north-western states did not stem exclusively from their solicitude for Indian security, and bringing Kalat, Afghanistan, Khokand and Persia into their "orbit of friendly powers...was part of a much more ambitious scheme of drawing the Central Asian states into an Anglo-Islamic front against Russia" (p. 41). This bold conclusion may not be warranted by the attitude displayed by Lawrence and his successors towards these states. Perhaps the author is impressed by Lytton's forward policy in entertaining this view.

The next three chapters are devoted to the events of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-8 and British involvement in it with its varied repercussions on diplomatic and military developments in India and the attitude of Indians to it. The author has given due prominence to the danger to British empire from Russia's occupation of Armenia, for it could

definitely enable her to dominate the Alexandretta-Basra route and the intervening region. This being the alternative route to the Suez canal, the British were quite sensitive to any modification in its occupancy. Proposals were made for the construction by Turkey with British aid of a railway line in the Euphrates valley. Germany's sponsorship of the Berlin, Baghdad Railway later brought her to the brink of war with the British. It is not surprising therefore that in the Balkan crisis of 1877-8 the British strategists were considering the propects of the railway line as well as the opening of the land route through West Asia to India. Dr Shukla has utilized the documents to expose the nervousness of the British Indian government, because Russian presence in West Asia had the potential of igniting the combustible heap of Indian disaffection and hurling the neighbouring states into the lap of Russia. He has critically examined the British reaction to the San Stefano treaty and the consequent measures adopted to safeguard their interests. Lytton's schemes of frontier defence were a sequel to that.

Subsequent chapters of the book examine the attitude of the Indian Muslims to the Russo-Turkish war and the exploitation of their sentiments towards the Caliphate by the British against Russia. The author has also discussed the anti-British activities of the Indian Muslims and the Turkish Sultanate after the war and the retaliatory British measures to wean the Arabs away from loyalty to the Sultan. Dr Shukla maintains that the British policy was motivated, apart from "strategic considerations", "by conditions in India", particularly the attitude of the Muslims towards the rulers; hence "support of the caliph of Islam was considered necessary towin Muslim loyalty to their rule" (p. 215). In this were inherent the seeds of pan-Islamism which assumed a militant role later. It was the British support which had strengthened the movement and perhaps it was utilized by them to hold in check the national movement later. Dr Shukla may not be far from the truth in his inference that "the spectre of Russian invasion of India...did certainly provide them (the British) with a bogey to serve some ulterior purposes" (p. 218) which he enumerate as completing "frontier arrangements" by bringing the "weak neighbouring states of India into the orbit of British influence", diverting "the mind of the Indian public from genuint grievances and consequent discontent to external danger", clamping down "repressiv measures on the people in the name of internal tranquillity" (p. 219), the winning of Muslim allegiance, etc. The thesis of the book appears to be that the Government of India voicing the imperial interests in this region, "was a powerful factor in the determination of British policy in the Eastern Question" (Ibid).

Dr Shukla's analysis of events and forces which gave rise to them is reasonable and his conclusions logical. It may be that he has been led to over-emphasize the aspect of Anglo Indian thinking in the determination of British policy, but he has used the sources to prove his point. His analysis of Muslim awareness of Turkish interests is something new and give colour to his study. I welcome this well-documented enlightening contribution to diplo matic history.

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MANORANJAN JHA, Role of Central Legislature in the Freedom Struggle (National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. viii+342. Rs. 13.50.

This is a matter-of-fact account of the part played by the central legislature in India's struggle for freedom during 1919-47. As the scope of historical research widens, we will frequently come across works such as this with the result that the traditional integrated picture of Indian national movement will break into its various component parts. Constitutional agitation leading to the voicing of national demands from legislatures forms one part of this movement which Dr Jha seeks to examine in this book. A likely risk in this type of work is that a particular aspect of a composite phenomenon gets undue importance to the neglect of its other and more significant aspects. Dr Jha fortunately is on guard against this pitfall and draws our attention to the fact that the main battles for India's freedom were fought outside the central legislature. What really advanced the nationalist cause was the mass movements and not the debates in the legislature.

Examined in terms of its attitude and response to mass movements, the role of the central legislature in our freedom movement appears to be negligible, for many major groups and parties inside it were opposed to any form of mass action. And since the diverse groups in the legislature failed to present a united stand and evolve a common programme. the effect of the debates was totally dissipated. Moreover, we rarely find any significant widening of the scope of the debates, although the social base of the nationalist movement appreciably widened during the period. Repressive measures enforced against the freedom fighters from time to time and certain topical issues produced much "sound and fury", but the bases of imperialism were seldom attacked and the vast problems of rural India hardly attracted any notice. And for all practical purposes the debates and resolutions passed here remained absolutely barren of results. Whenever defeated, the government had recourse to ordinances or "rule by certification", thus reducing the legislature to a farce. Virulent attacks on or defeats of the government "in its own citadel" might provide occasions for rejoicing, but in terms of concrete result the record of the legislature is dismal. Scoring a point in debate or getting a resolution carried through without any prospect of its ever being implemented was a leisurely pastime indulged in by those who had no faith in mass action.

Admittedly, the policy of associating Indians of upper and middle classes with the government was a sop to prevent "radicalisation of the national demand" and organization of militant mass movements. But was it not perfectly in line with the established British practice? What is significant is that this sinister design of the government was accomplished through the willing co-operation of the Indian leaders themselves. It is a measure of their understanding of the working of British imperialism that they took so many years to realize that they had been caught in a trap.

What stood at the back of this fear of mass movements which drove the leaders into a "sham legislature"? An analysis of this important aspect of the history of the central legislature is unfortunately lacking in the book. Their contact with or isolation from the masses, if examined at some length, would have provided fresh insights into the functioning of the central legislature.

There is very little of analysis or reflection: the conclusion, where there is some evidence of it, is utterly inadequate. The treatment of the subject is casual all through, for the author seems reluctant to go deep into it. He also appears a little afraid of committing himself and only occasionally and in very general (and hence vague) terms tries to identify the various interest groups in the legislature. He seems equally unwilling to examine the social base and outlook of those who claimed to represent the Indian people.

Since the book was written in a record time of three months, it naturally bears the marks of being prepared in haste. Its readability has been impaired by slipshod sentences, loose expressions, confused syntax, faulty punctuation, inappropriate use of words and phrases and numerous printing errors, most of which could have been avoided if the author had some more time at his disposal. The author nevertheless deserves praise for investigating a new aspect of the history of our freedom movement.

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R. L. SHUKLA

BIPAN CHANDRA, AMALES TRIPATHI AND BARUN DE, Freedom Struggle (National Book Trust, India, Delhi, 1972). Pp. viii+228. Rs. 5.50.

The book seeks to present, as the foreword says, an accurate and readable account of our freedom movement, taking into consideration its various strands and the diverse forces that contributed to it. It is a collective work dealing with three distinct phases of our freedom struggle written by three scholars. Professor Bipan Chandra discusses the early phase till 1905 (chapters I and II), Professor Amales Tripathi surveys the era of militant nationalism and the struggle for swaraj till 1930 (chapters III and IV) and Professor Barun De carries the story further to the attainment of independence in 1947 (chapters V and VI).

Bipan Chandra provides a fascinating résumé of the British rule, analyses the different aspects of British colonial policy and examines its impact on India. His incisive exposition of the economic and social consequences of British imperialism adds much to our knowledge of the subject. Without mincing matters he shows how the British attempted to convert India into their agrarian satellite and hampered the growth of a healthy body politic here by encouraging communal, obscurantist and reactionary forces. The author is at his best in his appraisal of the early nationalists' understanding of the character of British rule and their programme and activities. He does not deny the historical importance of their work, but shows an awareness of their weakness and limitations of their methods of struggle. Thus he pinpoints their lack of faith in mass action and the consequent isolation from the masses. He takes note of both the narrow social confines within which they operated and the varying interests and motives of different classes and groups within Indian society which shaped the response and attitude of each of these to the raj. The "safety valve" explanation of the birth of the Congress hardly deserves to be taken seriously and the author rightly thinks that its emergence as a force represented a stage in the social

evolution and political awakening of India. But to suggest that the early nationalist movement did not fight "for the narrow interests of the social classes and groups which joined it" (p. 72) is on the face of it generous.

Tripathi's treatment is pedestrian and adds precious little to our understanding of the subject. He seems to read too much into the Extremists' faith in the masses. He overrates their case when he says that they prepared to win freedom through mass action, although he himself admits that the mass of common people were still outside the mainstream of national politics. His characterization of the anti-partition agitation as the "united protest of all sections of Bengalis" (what he means by "Bengalis" is not clear) is difficult to reconcile with its delineation as "chiefly an urban movement" (p. 86). His observation that the "sentiments of a very sensitive and proud section of the Indian people had been rudely trampled upon" (Ibid) smacks of a parochial approach. The Congress no doubt underwent some significant changes under Gandhi: its social base was widened and its outlook and policy somewhat modified. But it would be too much to say that it became an instrument of "political socialisation", an expression about which the author is delightfully vague. It was during these years that the Congress received large financial support from the big business. to which the author does not even casually refer. Gandhi's constructive programme might have been socially useful to a degree, but its overall impact was at best marginal. The claim that the emphasis on khadi was a realistic assessment of rural needs (p. 142) appears therefore exaggerated.

Unlike Tripathi's, Barun De's account of the third and last phase of the freedom movement is balanced and objective. He takes due notice of its different currents and is not lost, as is usual, in the Congress affairs alone. He is also conscious of the contradictions within the movement and critical of Gandhi's vacillation and ambivalence which adversely affected the freedom struggle. The contributions of the Khudai Khidmatgars, frontier tribesmen, revolutionaries, peasants and workers to the movement are properly assessed and the compromising posture of the Congress is contrasted with the mass upsurge in the country. The author discusses the leftist and socialist influences inside the Congress and traces the evolution of its foreign policy, analysing its attitude to imperialism, fascism and socialism. What is unfortunately lacking in this otherwise well-written portion of the book is that not a word is said about the nature of our independence and its relevance to the vast multitude of long oppressed and dispossessed Indians.

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R. L. SHUKLA

DIETMAR ROTHERMUND, The Phases of Indian Nationalism and Other Essays (Nachiketa Publications, Bombay, 1970). Pp. 270. Rs. 30.00.

Under the guidance of Dietmar Rothermund the Heidelberg South Asia Institute has developed in recent years into a major centre of research on modern Indian history. The Phases of Indian Nationalism has brought together in a handy and not too expensive

wolume 14 of Professor Rothermund's essays, quite a number of them hitherto unpublished or available only in German.

The essays bear ample witness to Dietmar Rothermund's breadth of interest and capacity for clear exposition. A certain unevenness in quality and the lack of a unifying theme are not unexpected in a collection spread over nearly a decade; and if some of the generalizations seem hasty, the absence of "British" caution has its compensation in the shape of exciting and stimulating reading. Nine of the essays are about various aspects of Indian nationalism, while the rest tackle themes of economic and particularly agrarian history. Evident in both spheres is a natural progress from the particular to the general, from specific studies to broader surveys, at once more interesting and far more controversial.

The articles on nationalism begin, chronologically speaking (though this, perhaps unfortunately, is not the order followed in the book), with two rather light-weight studies of the Morley-Minto reforms and the Panjab press in 1920. Rothermund returns to the first theme in a more ambitious later essay on Gokhale and Risley (No. 2), which gives much interesting information but is burdened by an overdose of Talcott Parsonian jargon. That Risley and his fellow-advocates of communal as opposed to territorial representation were animated not by divide-and-rule motives but by a desire to "re-integrate" Indian society seems rather difficult to swallow and the assumptions underlying this essay contrast oddly with Rothermund's own brilliant exposure of imperialist methods in his articles on British Indian economic policies.

Rothermund's study of Nehru and early Indian socialism (No. 4) is commonplace except for a somewhat controversial emphasis on the alleged influence on Jawaharlal of the Vedantism of Vivekananda; it is thus connected with the far more stimulating lecture on Vivekananda himself which he delivered three years later at Chicago (No. 3). Traditionalism in Vivekananda, argues Rothermund, meant essentially a search for elements of solidarity and social harmony in the past. This gave rise to a kind of "ascriptive socialism", but despite occasional predictions of a shudra revolution the radical potentialities of the former were generally diluted in Vivekananda through his Vedantic identification of freedom and equality with individual self-realization and the net result was the merely "verbal radicalism which characterized the speeches of Indian leaders for many years to come" (p. 64). A really interesting thesis, it obviously requires far more rigorous elaboration through a detailed study of the corpus of Vivekananda's writings which Rothermund has not attempted.

Another important contribution is the long essay (No. 8) tracing the inter-relation of British reforms, nationalist agitation and the organizational changes in the Congress. Here Rothermund has laid special emphasis upon Gandhi's efforts to build up the Congress as a kind of "parallel government" (p. 124), an alternative and autonomous political society in its own right. Once again this is a hint which it would have been worthwhile to develop. Along with the Gandhian programme of rural revival through self-help and khadi, we have here a tradition which may be linked up with some aspects of extremism as well as with Rabindranath's atmashakti pleas. In its totality this is the nearest the Indian national movement came to evolving genuine instruments of hegemony, which might have allowed it to transcend the sterile polarity of mendicancy and terrorism.

Rothermund, however, fails to follow up his own hints and the essay on Gandhi as a creative politician (No. 7) tells us little that is new.

The most ambitious of the essays on nationalism are the ones on the role of the Western-educated élite (No. 9) and on the phases of Indian nationalism (No. 1). Here, unfortunately, Rothermund's passion for sweeping generalizations sometimes leads him seriously astray. The analysis of nationalist phases in terms of generational and regional tensions remains interesting, but it is all too easy to draw up a catalogue of dubious statements. Thus Poona surely deserves mention along with Bombay and Calcutta as focal points of early Indian nationalism (pp. 14-5). The statement that landlords could enhance rents on a large scale only after the 1870s (p. 17) is difficult to accept and the assumption that nationalists invariably opposed official interference with landlord-tenant relations in the late 19th century (pp. 17, 147) remains unproved. After losing their predominant position in the nationalist mainstream with the rise of Gandhi the Bengali bhadralok and the Chitpavan brahmins, we are told, turned either towards Communism or Hindu communalism, the individual choice of the one or the other being "rather fortuitous" (pp. 21,158): how does one explain according to this logic the appeal of communalism in the Hindi heartland and of Communism in Kerala or Andhra? It is startling, to say the least, to find Rothermund denying the existence of a "genuine bourgeoisie" in India even in the 1920s (p. 156) or trying to explain the educated élite's socialist sympathies by a high-caste aversion to the profit motive (p. 157). Upper-caste contempt for manual labour presumably should have pulled in the opposite direction and in any case Rothermund himself has warned us in his essay on impediments to economic development (No. 13) of the danger of depending too much on explanations in terms of caste factors and traditional valuesystems.

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Rash generalizations abound also in the article on Indian feudalism (No. 10) with which the section on economic history starts. The definition of feudalism as "a process of assimilation, a widening of social space" (p. 168) is not particularly illuminating and the equation of  $iqt\bar{a}$ 's and  $j\bar{a}g\bar{t}rs$  with fiefs (p. 174) will cause some surprise. Rothermund is on much surer ground, however, in his two essays dealing with the late 19th century tenancy legislation (Nos 11, 12). He has made a careful survey of the debate among British officials which preceded the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885. One would have liked to know much more, however, about nationalist attitudes concerning such legislation and this would also have given the whole book somewhat greater unity.

Impediments to development from below (No. 13) is an excellent study of the relative importance of socio-economic and cultural constraints on development. It would be oversimple and downright tendentious, Rothermund argues with much justice, to attribute India's present-day economic ills merely to factors like conservative resistance to innovations, caste rigidity or alleged other-worldliness. Much more important is the legacy of British colonial rule, which preserved and aggravated the worst features of the Mughal agrarian and revenue system and kept Indians excluded from the higher levels of industrial organization and finance. The last essay on the apparently dry and peripheral subject of Indian silver currency in the late 19th century gives the reader a real surprise by proving to be perhaps the best and most important article in the entire collection. Rothermund

has analysed here a little-known but vital aspect of the British system of colonial exploitation. The rapid depreciation in the gold value of the Indian silver rupee down to the closing of the mints in 1893 was welcomed even by the nationalist critiques of British Indian political economy due to the export bonus it gave to agriculture and the indirect protection in provided for the nascent textile industry. Rothermund argues, however, that the adverse consequences were far more serious. "The 'export bonus' provided by the depreciating currency imposed a pattern of trade on India which was not to its advantage" (p. 256) and as "even the richest men of India were excluded from the really substantial financial transactions which were based on the gold standard and controlled by the bankers of London" (p. 258), Indian capital was diverted towards parasitic landlordism and usury. Here is rich and suggestive material, indeed, for the historian and economist alike.

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SUMIT SARKAR

B. R. NANDA AND V. C. JOSHI (ed), Studies in Modern Indian History, Number One (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. viii + 214. Rs. 30.00.

The bunch of nine papers published by the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library is the first of the series it proposes to bring out under the above title. The task of interpreting the past and analysing the role of national leadership is not confined to historians and it is heartening to see some specialists in other fields contributing papers to this volume which is mainly devoted to the emergence of Indian nationalism and the growth of economic ideas in the country. Each paper is based on original research by its author and written in vivid and readable style, which makes the book interesting for the professional historian as well as the general reader.

It is not immediately clear what method has been followed in the arrangement of the essays, for the opening one entitled "The Advent of Mass Politics in India: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919" (pp. 1-18) by Ravinder Kumar does not deserve the pride of place. There is no doubt that he is a gifted writer and has recently published some scholarly works. But in the present paper almost everything is a repetition from his earlier paper on the Rowlatt Satyagraha at Lahore in a publication edited by him. Ravinder Kumar points out that the influence of Mahatma Gandhi was not so strong in the cities of northern India in 1919 as is commonly believed. This leads him to the conclusion that the citizens of Lahore and Amritsar participated in the Rowlatt Satyagraha "to express local frustrations and to secure parochial interests". Though the author maintains that Gandhi drew the masses into politics "at a considerable price", he does not answer the question whether any alternative course was open to a national leader in 1920.

In his paper "The Rise of Mahakoshal: The Central Provinces and Berar, India, 1919-39" (pp. 19-39) David Baker breaks new ground with an intensive study of the politics of the region during the early phase of the Gandhian era. He examines the response of the Hindi speaking community and the Marathi speaking community to the call for struggle

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to achieve freedom and shows that the élite of the two dominant linguistic regions struggled hard to maintain their authority. The author goes into the inner conflict in the Congress ministry during 1937-9 and argues that Ravishankar Shukla's ministry "did more than round off a period of 20 years in which Mahakoshal replaced the Marathi region as a dominant unit in a composite province" (p. 38). Both Ravinder Kumar and David Baker use the term "agitation" for political movements; this should have been avoided.

Bimal Prasad's "The Congress Split at Surat" (pp. 144-76) is a lucid reconstruction of the developments leading to the fateful event of 1907. He intelligently evaluates the various viewpoints on the subject and asserts that "the major share of responsibility for this split must be borne by the Moderates" (p. 173). B. R. Nanda's paper on C. F. Andrews (pp. 194-208) is an able study of this "pioneer builder of bridges between embattled races and nations" (p. 195), who never ceased to believe in or work for an Indo-British accord. In his essay on "Nehru and Tagore" (pp. 177-93) R. K. Das Gupta sees a "basic affinity between their world views and their perspectives of Indian history" (p. 193). Nehru, he says, was deeply impressed by Tagore's ability to draw from the wisdom of the ancient past and give it a practical meaning in the present, and remarks that one of the "happiest things in the intellectual history of modern India is that this new language of the Poet was understood by the statesman" (Ibid).

The papers on Indian economic ideas and perspectives on economic development included in this volume prove convincingly that history has conditioned present policies. Bipan Chandra's "British and Indian Ideas on Indian Economic Development, 1858-1905" (pp. 76-114) is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the problems of colonial economy. He explains that the British writers consistently denied that India was economically stagnant and thought that her development would depend on the application of foreign capital. By the end of the 19th century, however, such writings lost their hold and the Indian nationalists began to scrutinize the causes of the economic backwardness of the country; the famines of 1896 and 1900 demonstrated beyond doubt that "something was wrong with the existing British model of growth" (p. 101).

Tarlok Singh's paper "Jawaharlal Nehru: Planned Development and the National Synthesis" (pp. 62-75) traces the appeal of planning to the late Prime Minister and observes that Nehru's social approach largely determined his outlook on economic policy and structure. In another paper entitled "Developmental Perspectives in India: Some Reflections on Gandhi and Nehru" (pp. 115-43) P. C. Joshi expounds the socio-economic ideals of Gandhi and Nehru. Gandhi, according to him, outlined the ideal of swadeshi with its implicit accent on self-reliance and "voluntary poverty"; Nehru on the other hand cherished the modernization of Indian society and industrial progress and sought to link the question of development with the building of a new social order.

B. M. Bhatia's paper "The Elite Approach to Study of Modern Indian History" (pp. 40-61) discusses the problem of methodology in history and suggests that the élite model put forward by the two famous sociologists, Mosca and Pareto, can serve as an excellent starting point for the study of modern Indian history. He describes the role of "the middle strata of society" in the recent past of our country and thinks that the power

struggle between the governing and non-governing élite is as crucial in the post-Independence era as it was earlier. The point needs further elaboration and debate.

The book is free from printing errors and well brought out.

Banaras Hindu University Varanasi J. P. MISRA

SUSOBHAN SARKAR, Bengal Renaissance and Other Essays (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1970). Pp. xiii+285. Rs. 20.00.

It is the job of publishers to applaud every book they bring out, but in this book by the doyen of Bengal's historians the blurb offers the bare truth when it states:

The remarkable feature of this selection of essays by one of Bengal's most outstanding contemporary scholars is the combination of versatility and unity, of depth of study with lucidity of exposition....It comes rarely to publishers to be able to offer to readers the working of a master-mind as it grapples with terrain of historical reality as in this selection of essays.

Professor Sarkar himself is far more modest and writes:

The contents, written over the span of years, are in the nature of historical surveys, about half of them dealing with different aspects of the Bengal Renaissance. Some of the articles examine general conceptions of history, I suppose, in a controversial way....Taken together, the disjointed essays may thus offer some variety... (p. v).

The booklet Notes on the Bengal Renaissance, written and published as far back as 1946 as a factual sketch to supply background material to political workers on the left, forms the only article in part one of the book (pp. 1-74). The author starts with a brilliant estimate of Rammohun:

The central characteristics in the life and thought of Rammohun Roy were his keen consciousness of the stagnant, degraded and corrupt state into which our society had fallen, his deep love of the people which sought their all-round regeneration, his critical appreciation of the value of modern Western culture and the ancient wisdom of the East alike, and his untiring many-sided efforts in fighting for improving the conditions around him (p. 5).

Within a span of 10 brief pages (pp. 5-14) he gives an excellent résumé of the wideranging progressive activities of the dynamic Rammohun and comments, "Recent detractors of his deserved reputation have merely revealed their own failure to grasp the significance of the renaissance in our country". However, one wishes that Professor Sarkar had dealt, even if briefly, with the acutely controversial question of Rammohun's advocacy of the continuance of British rule in India and his seeming unawareness of the destruction of our weavers under the impact of alien colonial rule, and reconciled it with his obviously deep love for liberty and welfare of the common man. This contradiction in Rammohun, the titan of the Bengal Renaissance, is perhaps a reflection of the ambivalence inherent in

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the renaissance itself, because the standard-bearers, the educated middle class of Bengal, sprang from the ranks of the landed gentry, who in turn were entirely dependant on the alien colonial rule for their affluence and positions of privilege. A quarter century later, in his Presidential address to the Indian History Congress in 1972, Professor Sarkar summed up the renaissance in Bengal with a masterly analysis in these words:

...awakening is always a relative term.... The undoubted limitations of our 19th century 'awakening' lay in three directions: the failure of the educated community to understand the exploiting character of the alien British rule; the gulf between the 'illuminated' bhadralog and the toiling masses who lived in a world apart; and the obsession with Hindu traditions which helped to keep the men of our renaissance aloof from the Muslims (p. 17).

This reads almost like a footnote to his earlier Notes on the Bengal Renaissance.

In another pioneering essay "Derozio and Young Bengal" (pp. 108-22) Professor Sarkar drew the pointed attention of our younger historians to the important role played in our national awakening by the much maligned Derozio and Derozians, better known as the "Young Bengal" group. His verdict has been vindicated by the subsequent exhaustive finding on the activities of the Derozians and their various organizations such as "Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge", the Deshahitaishanee Sabha" and the "Bengal British India Society", where the stormy petrels of the Hindoo College wrote papers advocating education through the medium of Bengali and emancipation of women, including widow re-marriage, and championed the cause of the neglected peasantry of Bengal. Professor Sarkar has aptly closed his essay with the lines of the Derozian Kishorichand Mitra, written in 1861, "The youthful band of reformers who had been educated at the Hindoo College, like the tops of Khanchanjunga, were the first to catch and reflect the dawn..." (pp. 121-2).

A completely different essay is the writer's appraisal of the Revolt of 1857. Here he has sympathetically but objectively analysed the differing assessments of S. N. Sen and R. C. Majundar, established the unorganized, spontaneous and mass character of the revolt and summed up the whole complex phenomenon in one neat para:

The English educated classes were against the movement for their eyes were naturally turned to the benefits only of British rule and the fascination of the moderate constitutional liberal path of progress. Looking back after a century, one is not bound to accept their evaluation. Aware of the evils of the old feudalism, they had not yet realised the terrible price exacted by colonial imperialism, the brunt of the burden of which was borne by the less fortunate common people (pp. 134-5).

Equally sound are Professor Sarkar's two essays on Rabindranath Tagore (pp. 136-83). In India and abroad Tagore's poems, songs, stories and plays have received due appreciation, but his essays, which reveal him as a great patriot and humanist, are often pushed to the background. In the brief essay entitled "Progress and Rabindranath Tagore" (pp. 136-47) the author has tried his best to fill in this gap and summed up Tagore, the seer and statesman, with telling effect.

In a very long active life, Tagore...sought to teach his countrymen many things which will not easily fade out....He never forgot that the economic distress of the

peasantry was a main problem and that was why he was drawn into village uplift endeavours from the very start....He preached over half a century ago that the mother tongue was the only true vehicle of education. On the one hand he lashed with ridicule the idea of all-round Hindu superiority. On the other, he condemned the tendency of state worship in the West though he was an admirer of many western values; the tendency he denounced of course culminated later into one of the main planks of fascism which in due course he attacked....Memorable is his confession at the last stage that his faith in the civilisation he had trusted so long was 'running bankrupt'. The writings in the last period reveal a discontent and a yearning to get closer to the masses, a doubt and a discontent (pp. 146-7).

There are many more gems among his varied essays but space does not permit us to discuss all of them. One may conclude with an excerpt from his scintillating essay on "Conceptions of History" (pp. 219-25), a polemical battle with another eminent historian, Prefessor R. C. Majumdar:

Do we dismiss today the spokesmen of medieval European culture on the ground of their religious narrowness? Amir Khusraw might have been an anti-Hindu bigot, but he also did write about 'royal treasures drenched in the tears of the subjects'...the determination of the true nature of Muslim rule in India must not be partial and incomplete, just as enquiries about the lives of Nana Sahib and Bahadur Shah, Tantia Topi and the Rani of Jhansi, cannot be the principal factor in understanding the essential character of the Revolt of 1857 (pp. 224-5).

We eagerly look forward to a companion second volume of historical essays by Professor Susobhan Sarkar, for these essays, spread over the last four decades, "stoked the first doubts" of many of our younger historians.

CALCUTTA

GAUTAM CHATTOPADHYAY

MANORANJAN JHA, Katherine Mayo and India (People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1971). Pp. xii+128. Rs. 12.50.

What part did British diplomatic initiative play in the genesis of anti-India propaganda of the 1920s in the United States? As a case study Dr Jha looks at the murky origins of the famous tract, *Mother India*.

The first chapter (pp. 1-21) provides the background story—an account of the US attitudes towards contemporary Indian political scene from the beginning of American private trade in the late 18th century. The author notes the apprehension expressed by an anonymous well-wisher of the East India Company of the danger inhering in American traders mixing with Indians, which was likened to "the Devil sowing the Tares among the Wheat". The nationalist upsurge in the late 19th and early 20th centuries evoked the interest of several American politicians and public men, among them William Jenning Bryan, who severely criticized the British imperialist exploitation of the Indian people is his book, The Old World and Its Ways (St. Louis, 1907). The British were anxious to prevent

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this view from gaining currency. President Theodore Roosevelt's praise of the British rule in January 1909 acted like a sop; his era of new imperialism coincided with the first signs of sympathy for British imperialism among certain sections of American people. The antiimperialist propaganda in the USA by the Indian revolutionaries and nationalists on the eve of and during the first World War, the charisma of Gandhi in the post-war period and the keenness of American commercial interests to increase trade contacts with the British Indian ports and Indian merchants, however, helped create a climate in that country which was favourable to Indian national aspirations. Dr Jha has used material from the National Archives of India and the Public Records Office, London, to show that the British Foreign Office and Government of India spent considerable sums of money in trying to penetrate the US intellectual circles to make them more soft towards the role of British imperialism in India. Rushbrook Williams, Director of the Central Bureau of Information of the Government of India during 1920-6, played a key role in organizing this counter-campaign, which was carried out through a British Library of Information in New York by men like Professor E. A. Horne of the Government College, Patna, who was appointed to serve on the staff of the Harvard University at the expense of the Government of India, Parsee Rustomji Rustom and by the hired propagandists from the USA. Cecil Kaye, one of the senior intelligence officers engaged in fighting the spread of Communism among Indian revolutionaries abroad, suggested in 1920 that the latter "should be allowed to appear to be enterprising journalists, who are independent seekers after truth". Katherine Mayo's credentials for this role are examined in this context. An upper class eastern seaboard spinster born in 1867, she had contributed articles to several leading American journals and also lived among poverty-stricken and exploited Indian migrant labour in Dutch Guinea in South America. In her book The Isles of Fear (1925) she had justified the US delay in granting self-government to Philippines on the ground that the Filipino neither desired nor were ready for independence. Her anti-nationalist predilections were thus unimpeachable. Hence the choice and her sponsored trip to India, which led to Mother India.

The author has built an atmosphere of a whodunit in chapters II and III (pp. 22-79) to prove the complicity of the British propaganda officials and senior servants of the Government of India in the biased and grossly distorted portrayal of Indian life by Miss Mayo. Her original mentor on board the ship coming to India was J. H. Adam, D.I.G., C.I.D., Lahore, whose inveterate hostility to the Hindus is borne out by the Mayo Papers in the Yale University Library and who took a "friendly" interest in making Miss Mayo a mouthpiece of the Indian police. Lord Lytton, the anti-Congress Governor of Bengal, got her introduced in Calcutta to L. Birley, the Chief Secretary, and Sir Charles Tegart, the infamous Chief Commissioner of Police. Another conduit of information was the notorious anti-Indian propagandist John Coatman, Director of Public Information, Government of India, who convinced Miss Mayo that most Indians were sex-starved, homosexual and impotent immediately after they became mature. Even higher officials of the government, such as the Home Member, Sir Alexander Muddiman, and Under Secretary of State for India, Lord Winterton, gave her encouragement.

There is an interesting reference in Mayo's account of Calcutta to "many little bookstalls where narrow-chested, near-sighted, anaemic young Indian students in native dress, brood over piles of fly-blown Russian pamphlets" (p. 13). A pertinent question is whether the Russian pamphlets were so easily available in College Street in 1927. In any case Miss Mayo's antipathy to Communism was as strong as her dislike of Indian nationalism, and in the context of her close links with the Home and Police Department officials Mother India may appear as a part of Kaye's anti-Communist campaign in the 1920s.

Miss Mayo also sought to drive a wedge of misunderstanding between the Hindus and the Muslims. All her slander or abuse was reserved for the Hindus and the Muslims were depicted as a proud and virile race. Mayo's delineation of Indian sexuality was also directed against the Hindus. One is left with the impression that the British were at this time seeking to exploit the beginnings of communal disharmony after the failure of the Khilafat movement and trying to strengthen the rift created by the Sangathan and Tabligh movements as well as by the Calcutta communal riot of 1926. Dr Jha, however, does not elaborate these points.

The author's section on the reactions to Mother India (chapter IV, pp. 80-102) is inadequate, inasmuch as he does not go into the basic question of the precise direction in which the British propaganda tried to orient American public opinion-mere sympathy for British imperialism or active alliance with it as a counterpoise to the nationalist and Communist attack on imperialism. Dr Jha also chooses to leave out a detailed analysis of the intellectual history of anti-Indian feelings in the USA after Katherine Mayo's time. He has dedicated the book "To those Americans who, despite Katherine Mayo and persons of her ilk, stood by the cause of Indian nationalism". Presumably he has in mind mainly the liberals like Norman Brown, who have been pillars of the American South Asian Studies academic establishment. Yet, is it not a fact that American support to Indian nationalism in the late 1930s and 1940s came at least as much from left-wing radicals such as L. Rasinger and Kate Mitchall? As heirs to the 19th century populist and demagogic tradition, some of them suffered terribly under McCarthyism, while the liberals cowered in fright in their universities during the 1950s. To ignore this will create the wrong impression that all those Americans who were not actively pro-British before 1947 supported Indian nationalism, which in fact was championed most in the years immediately before independence by the left wing in the USA and not by the liberals, many of whom joined the O.S.S. during the second World War.

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES CALGUTTA

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SAROJINI REGANI, Highlights of the Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh (Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1973). Pp. xii+234+ix. Rs. 2.50.

Historical writing on modern Andhra in general and on the theme of the present work in particular remains practically a virgin field in spite of the availability of substantial primary source material on the subject. In this informative and well-written book the

author describes the part played by the Andhras in the country's struggle for freedom. A brief sketch of the early history of Andhra is followed by a survey of the initial anti-British revolts, the growth of Western education, the Press and social reform movements, the Vande Mataram and Swadeshi movements, the activities of the Home Rule League and the Justice Party, the non-co-operation movement, the organization of the Swaraj Party, the emergence of the Socialist Forum, the civil disobedience movement, the Quit India movement and the last phase of liberation movement in the state against the national background. Certain notable events of this movement in Andhra such as the Chirala-Perala struggle ably organized and led by Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya (pp. 83-6), the no-tax campaign and the Pedanandipadu satyagraha (pp. 89-94), and the Rampa rebellion organized by Alluri Sitarama Raju (pp. 94-101) have been satisfactorily described in the book.

The movement for independence in the erstwhile state of Hyderabad finds a significant place in the work (chapter VI, pp. 167-234) and the differences in the content and style of the freedom movement in Andhra and Telengana regions are pinpointed. As the author observes:

...from the beginning of the 19th century onwards the development of the social, political and cultural history of the two regions takes two distinct forms on account of the fact that these two regions happened to be under two different and distinct setups. We find that the course of the freedom struggle in the two areas runs on two different patterns (p. 5).

Sponsored in connection with the silver jubilee celebrations of independence, the book has no index. Printing errors too have crept in. Nevertheless, one hopes that this book, in conjunction with the collection in four volumes of the primary source material on freedom movement in Andhra by Professor M. Venkatarangaiya (besides a similar effort relating to the Telengana region), would stimulate historians to make a detailed study of the contribution of Andhra Pradesh to the mainstream of India's freedom struggle.

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V. M. REDDI

A. C. BOSE, Indian Revolutionaries Abroad (Bharti Bhavan, Patna, 1971). Pp. xvi+268. Rs. 30.00.

This is a study of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad in the background of international developments. After tracing the roots of resurgent extremism in India and the development of various centres of Indian revolutionary activities in Europe the author has described in detail the activities of the Indian patriots in Britain, France, the USA, Canada and the countries of East and West Asia from 1905, when such activities assumed an organized form in the foreign lands, till 1922. With the flare-up of the first World War in Europe these activities naturally got an impetus as it was believed by the Indian revolutionaries everywhere that England's difficulty was India's opportunity. Sufficient light has been thrown on the efforts of individuals, associations and groups during the war to secure

the support of Germany and her allies in obtaining arms and money to be sent to India for using them in a revolt against the British government, their activities in the USA where organizations of Indian workers were formed at various places and abortive plans to raid Indian frontiers from different countries of South-East Asia and West Asia. The activities of the Ghadar party, whose volunteers were active in many countries of Europe, South East Asia, Japan and China during the war and the hectic efforts of the India Committee and other organizations of Indians in foreign lands during and after the war as well as their earlier contacts with the Bolsheviks have been highlighted. Evidently the Indian revolutionaries in different parts of the country were trying their best to exploit the international situation in collaboration with their counterparts abroad and this has been underlined in the book. In the concluding chapter the author has tried to briefly analyse the objectives of the persons and groups working in foreign countries for the freedom of their motherland and assess their successes, failures and shortcomings. Short biographical sketches of a few prominent revolutionaries given at the end add to the value of the book.

Professor Bose has consulted for his work a wide range of source materials in India and abroad. Besides the records of the Governments of India and West Bengal and the microfilms of the records of the Governments of the USA and Germany preserved in the National Archives of India he has utilized the official records in the India Office, London. He has taken sufficient pains to procure oral or written statements from those Indians and foreigners who took part in this movement at various centres of the three continents. Papers in the custody of individuals connected with the events and contemporary Indian and foreign newspapers have also been studied by him. He cannot be faulted for his inability to get access to official records in several foreign countries despite his best efforts.

We are, however, unable to agree with the basic approach of Professor Bose. Believing as he does that the language of facts is more adequate and eloquent than exhaustive commentaries, he "deliberately" keeps his "comments to a minimum" (Preface, p. xii). This makes the study appear more or less like a diary in which personalities and incidents, trivial or important, figure prominently, and a very clear picture of the contacts between the Indian revolutionaries abroad and those at home does not emerge. With abundant authentic source materials at his command, it would have been worthwhile for him to attempt an intensive study of the objectives and methods of Indian revolutionaries at home and abroad along with a more elaborate appraisal of their achievements and failures. As regards his cautious view that our memory of the Indian national movement is still "charged with emotions" to some extent, he has shown himself remarkably free from prejudice. On the whole the author deserves congratulations for putting the entire Indian revolutionary movement abroad in its international perspective during its most critical phase and presenting in a fascinating manner the true images of the personalities and activities of many known and unknown soldiers of freedom who contributed in their own way towards the political salvation of the motherland.

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L. P. MATHUR, Indian Revolutionary Movement in the United States of America (S. Chand & Co., New Delhi, 1970). Pp. x+169. Rs. 22.50.

Almost from the dawn of this century the USA was the most important theatre of activity of the Indian revolutionaries abroad, and her official as well as non-official sympathies were usually with India's struggle and aspirations. From that point of view Dr Mathur has made a commendable effort at focussing with great objectivity our attention on a very important phase of the national movement. But it is unfortunate that he should appear to be somewhat in a hurry and therefore less than just to his task as well as to his reputation for thoroughness. Such unjustified haste alone can explain the errors of facts and interpretation in this otherwise useful work.

Thus Har Dayal joined the Stanford University in February 1912 and not in 1911 (p. 21), and according to both Randhir Singh and Khushwant Singh The Hindu Sabha comprising most Indian Associations on the Pacific Coast was formed on 13 March 1913 and not a year earlier (p. 22). Bhagwan Singh cannot be associated with the Indian revolutionary activities in the USA in the early years (p. 23) because it was on 22 May 1914 that he first entered that country. Considering that the Ghadar was first published on 1 November 1913 the decision to publish this revolutionary journal appears to have been taken at the general meeting at Sacramento in October 1913 (as stated in the History Sheet of the Ghadar) rather than in March or May of that year (p. 24). Bhupendra Nath Datta came to Germany in May 1915 from the USA via Greece and not from India (p. 77) which he had left in 1908. The alias with which Narendra Nath Bhattacharya left India in August 1915 was not S. Martin (p. 91) but C. A. Martin and he reached San Francisco in June 1916 and not in 1917 (p. 90). Hoquiam is not near Washington (p. 89), which is the capital of the USA, but is in the state of Washington on the Pacific Coast. Daus Dekker was not a Japanese (p. 91) but a half-caste Javanese, and Jadugopal Mukherjee (p. 127) had never been outside India; it was his younger brother, Dhangopal, who earned reputation as a writer in the USA. The Hindustan Association of Chicago was primarily a cultural rather than a revolutionary organization (p. 22). There is no reason to believe the British charge that Har Dayal was in communication with the Germans even when he was in the USA. No such hint is found in the memoirs of either the German Ambassador, Bernstorff, or of his Military Attache, Franz von Papen. In fact, Har Dayal had always a hatred for German authoritarianism and militarism and although he was staying in Switzerland after jumping his bail in March 1914, he did not go to Germany until he received a specific invitation for this from his old friend Barakatullah. The Komagatamaru was chartered on a business venture to circumvent the Canadian immigration regulations. Gurdit Singh, on his own admission, did not have any revolutionary intentions and the Japanese captain of the ship was in no way sympathetic towards the Indians or their aspirations (p. 59). According to the Komagatamaru Enquiry Commission Report, she sailed from Hong Kong on 4 April and not on 14 (p. 63).

Given the necessary time and thought a more meaningful pattern of what happened and why and how would have emerged, and the aims, assumptions and achievements of

the Indian revolutionaries as well as their in-fights and relations with the Germans could have been more clearly brought out. There is no dearth of printed source materials even in English and Dr Mathur could have profitably used them to give his work a greater depth and dimension. Among these may be mentioned K. K. Banerjee, Indian Freedom Movement: Revolutionaries in America (Calcutta, 1969); Albrecht von Bernstorff, My Three Years in America (London, 1920); Chandra Chakravarty, New India (Calcutta, 1950) (it contains valuable excerpts from the American journals that reported the San Francisco trial); R.K. Das, Hindusthanee Workers on the Pacific (Berlin, 1927); J. P. Jones and P. M. Hollester. The German Secret Service in America (Toronto, 1918); Henry Landau, The Enemy Within (New York, 1917); Haridas T. Majumdar, America's Contribution to India's Freedom (Allahabad, 1962); Franz von Papen, Memoirs (London, 1952); Gurdit Singh, Voyage of the Komagatamaru (Calcutta, no date); E. E. Sperry, German Plots and Intrigues in the U.S.A. during the Period of our Neutrality (Washington, 1918); T. G. Masaryk, Making of A State (London, 1927); E. V. Voska and W. Irwin, Spy and Counter-spy (London, 1941): S. Chandrasekhara, "The Indian Community in the U.S.", Far Eastern Survey, 6 June 1945; E. S. Kite, "American Criticism of 'The Other Side' of the Medal", Modern Review, February 1927; Harry A. Mills, "East Indian Immigration to British Columbia and the Pacific Coast States", American Economic Review, March 1911; and D. P. Singh (of Bhagalpur University), "American Official Attitudes towards Indian Nationalist Movement, 1906-1912", unpublished Ph. D. thesis of the University of Hawaii, 1964. These throw considerable light on the growth and condition of the Indian community of settlers in the USA, their commitment to revolutionary nationalism, relations with the Germans, internal rivalries, sacrifices and the way the Czechs and other friends of the British spied on them and contributed to their failure. However, a list of what the author could have consulted is less important than what he has done, and any one interested in the theme of the book will find it readable and informative, particularly the pages on the secret codes and passwords of the Indian revolutionaries.

University of Jammu Jammu A. C. Bose

SISIR K. BOSE, ALEXANDER WERTH AND S. A. AYER (ed), A Beacon Across Asia (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. xvi+340. Rs. 40.00.

This is the English version of the trilingual biography of Subhas Chandra Bose published also in Japanese and German. A team of German, Japanese and Indian writers who were closely associated with Netaji and his work have collaborated to produce this with the avowed objective of projecting his image in true historical perspective, free from the misunderstandings created by the malignant British and Allied propaganda during and after the war. The book has 11 appendices containing important speeches of Netaji, which give a feel of the man and his ideas.

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Chapter I by N. G. Jog covers the period from 1897 to 1933 and deals with Bose's early life, his political apprenticeship under C. R. Das and emergence as a dedicated spearhead of the left wing in the Congress (its working vis-à-vis Gandhi's leadership is also narrated) and a headache to the British government. Chapter II by Lothar Frank is devoted to the period of his exile in Europe from 1933 to 1936, when Bose came in contact with the newly emerging forces there, especially Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. and visualized co-operation with Germany against Britain, though he found Hitler's racial prejudice and low rating of the Indians' ability to throw out the British (p. 50) quite irksome. Jog surveys the period from Bose's return to India in April 1936 to his escape to Berlin in April 1941 in chapter III. Bose's election as Congress President at Haripura (1938), his successful defiance of Gandhi on the issue of re-election as President for Tripuri Congress (1939), subsequent resignation and break with the Congress, founding of the Forward Bloc. outbreak of the war and his resolve to go to Germany to work for India's freedom are described here. In chapter IV Alexander Werth explains how despite the racial ideology of the Nazis Bose received sympathy and support from a group of Germans in the Information Department of the Foreign Office (pp. 116-7) and although his meetings with Ribbentrop and Hitler cut no ice, he succeeded in organizing the activities of the Free India Centre, which included radio broadcasts against Britian, and in making a submarine voyage to Japan when he found his continued stay in Germany of no great consequence. Japan was at this time under tremendous Allied pressure and the Axis powers were on the defensive. Bose, however, saw here an opportunity to spearhead the liberation campaign into India and his forceful personality went a long way to convince Tokyo of including India in the co-prosperity sphere. The whirlwind tours of Bose, his illuminating addresses to the Indians in South-East Asia, the formation of the "Provisional Government of Free India", the transfer of Andaman-Nicobar islands to it and the organization of Imphal campaign have been brilliantly portrayed by F.S.T. Hayasida in chapter V. The unconditional capitulation of Japan to the Allies in August 1945 saw Netaji ready to seek Soviet help in continuing his campaign against Britain (p. 221). But the chance never came and he was killed in an aircrash at Taipei on 18 August 1945. His name echoed through the length and breadth of India during the subsequent I.N.A. trial ably recounted by Jog in chapter VI. Netaji appeared to be "more powerful in death than alive"

The book is an unqualified eulogy of Netaji, his tireless devotion, magnetic personality and selfless dedication. The tensions in his day-to-day dealings with the German and Japanese generals, who often took independent decisions, have been played down and the picture of his relations with the Japanese is too rosy to be real. The authors have soft-pedalled the fact that the Indian Legion in Germany had to take an oath of loyalty to Hitler and the I.N.A. was tied to the Japanese supreme command. They should have explored the working of Bose's mind vis-à-vis Soviet Russia in whose eyes he was a Quisling, though this did not deter him from planning to go to Manchuria after the defeat of the Japanese forces there. For the rest, the altruism of Japanese leaders has been overblown. The authors have, however, fully met the charge of fascist outlook against Bose, whose patriotism and faith in socialism stand out clearly in the book. But a separate chapter on

his socio-economic and political ideals might have proved more useful. Notwithstanding a few contradictory statements and printing errors, the book is an experiment of its own kind and has largely succeeded in projecting the true historical image of Netaji as a revolutionary.

RANCHI UNIVERSITY RANCHI A. P. SHARMA

SUKUMAR BHATTACHARYYA, The Rajput States and the East India Company (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. xii+279; 1 map. Rs. 35.00.

Tod's treatment of the East India Company's relations with the Rajput states has the flavour of contemporary historical writing, but it is no more than an appendix to the story of Rajput chivalry which is the theme of his Annals and Antiquities. He did not conceal his total condemnation of the "predatory" policy of the Marathas which worked havoe in Rajasthan, and his criticism of some aspects of British policy towards the Rajput states reveals his sympathy for their historic role. The beginning of serious historical studies on the submission of the Rajput states to British paramountcy was marked by M. S. Mehta's well-known work, Lord Hastings and the Indian States (Bombay, 1930). The present reviewer tried to cover wider ground in his book, The Rajput States and the East India Company (Calcutta, 1951). In recent years several young scholars have made useful contributions to this subject which forms an important chapter in the history of British imperial expansion in India. To this category belongs the work under review, which is a fine example of painstaking research and careful historical judgement.

The scope of the work, as indicated by the author, is "a critical and comprehensive survey of the first phase in the history of Anglo-Rajput relations". This phase ends with the treaties which brought Rajasthan within the sphere of the British imperial system. "The Rajput States", says the author (p. 268), "mortgaged their independence to the East India Company for peace and security". How and why their "peace and security" were threatened is explained briefly in the introductory chapter entitled "Rajputana in Disintegration". The period covered in this survey—the 18th century —precedes the period on which the author's study of primary sources is concentrated. He has not found it necessary to illustrate the decadence of the Rajput states from a critical analysis of Rajasthani, Marathi and Persian sources. To trace the origin and development of the germs of dissolution in the political and socio-economic systems of Rajasthan would provide an excellent field for research for investigators who are not frightened by the linguistic multiplicity of source materials.

The author's theme really begins with a critical analysis of Wellesley's policy (chapter II) which, though initially "halting and almost fruitless", actually "foreshadowed the extension of British alliance with, and control over, the whole of Rajputana". Before "the logic of events reached its climax" in the days of Lord Hastings, the policy of non-intervention had an anachronistic trial during the Cornwallis-Barlow-Minto regime which is studied in detail in chapters III-IV. This was the period of reaction against the policy of

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"the ambitious and expensive Lord Wellesley"; it reflected the conviction in British political circles that "it is physically impracticable for Great Britain, in addition to all other embarrassments, to maintain so vast and so unwieldy an empire in India". There was another factor in Minto's calculations: alarmed by reports of a French design to invade India, he decided to remain "a silent spectator" of the affairs of Rajputana (p. 115).

Political developments during the administration of Lord Minto demonstrated the "utter impracticability" of "perseverance in that neutral policy" (p. 158) and prepared the ground for its change which yielded spectacular results during the next few years. Lord Hastings, who had been "severely critical of the ambitious policy of Lord Wellesley", found himself "called upon by circumstances" not only to revive it, but also to carry it to

completion. History was not too late in vindicating Wellesley's foresight.

The development and working of the changed policy constitute the subject-matter of three chapters (V-VII). The background is lucidly explained; external aggression and internal distractions forced the Rajput states to seek British protection, and the urgency of suppressing the Pindaris and of crushing the Maratha power made alliance with Rajasthan a political necessity. The process of treaty-making was not a smooth one; Metcalfe found it difficult to "overcome the almost inexplicable scruples and vacillations of the Vakils of Jaipur" (p. 198). In recognition of Mewar's historic pre-eminence Metcalfe was prepared to concede special terms, but the Rana's envoy accepted the usual conditions (p. 218). The author analyses the principal common features of the treaties concluded with the Rajput states (pp. 228-31) and deals separately with the special provisions in case of some of the lesser states (pp. 231-5). But a literal interpretation of the treaties is not enough; with the Pindaris and the Marathas driven away from the scene, says the author, "the new relations between the Company and the Rajput States began to take shape in the context of the internal situation" (p. 240). He notes the beginning of the working of paramountcy, but the full development of the "new relations" is beyond the scope of his volume.

The narrative is based almost wholly on unpublished British official records which have been utilized with diligence and care. Printed documents and secondary works have been used as supplementary material. The author's search for Rajasthani materials at the State Archives at Bikaner "led to disappointing results", but he hopes that "when these materials are made available to research scholars, additional information on the internal condition of Rajasthan will probably broaden our understanding of the period". A good bibliography and a map add to the value of the book.

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY CALCUTTA

A. C. BANERIEE

R. D. CHOKSEY, Mountstuart Elphinstone: The Indian Years 1796-1827 (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1971). Pp. xiv+465.Rs. 60.00.

Mountstuart Elphinstone may justly be regarded as the maker of modern western India and as one of the early British statesmen who strengthened the British rule in this country. As such, he has attracted the attention of many scholars in the past and continues to do so now. T. E. Colebrooke, a close associate of Elphinstone, wrote his first comprehensive biography in two volumes in 1884. Mr Cotton's Life of Elphinstone, written in 1892 for the Rulers of India series and edited by Hunter, has been described as a "story of a brilliant life brilliantly told". W. Forrest, who edited his Official Writings, also attempted a brief sketch of his life in 1884. Professor K. A. Ballhatchet in his monograph Social Policy and Social Change in Western India 1817-30 gave an analytical account of his activities in this part of the country. Dr Choksey has now come forth with a fresh account of Elphinstone based on the journals and papers preserved in the India Office Library, London.

This author of about a dozen books on the political and economic history of western India from 1818 to 1939 describes in the present study different facets of Elphinstone's career in India. Book I covers the period 1796-1808 and recounts the family background of Elphinstone, his arrival at Banaras and moving to the politics of Poona and central India. The period synchronized with the downfall of the Marathas and rise of the British. When Elphinstone came to Poona in 1801 the wisdom and moderation in the Maratha country had departed with the death of Nana Phadnavis in 1800. Bajirao II mortgaged the Maratha state with the British by accepting the subsidiary alliance system of Wellesley in 1802. The experience gained at Poona, Nagpur and in central India enabled Elphinstone to make a first-hand appraisal of the waning Maratha power. Book II (1808-9) is entirely devoted to his mission to Kabul. Book III (1810-18), which is the most important part of the study, narrates his return to Poona as Resident, within eight years of which he liquidated the Maratha empire. Elphinstone's settlement of the territories conquered from the Peshwa has been described in Book IV. Book V deals with his career as the governor of Bombay (1819-27).

For narrating the story of the Indian years of Elphinstone Dr Choksey has heavily and almost exclusively drawn on the 24 journals preserved in the India Office Library. These are in his words:

a mirror to Mountstuart's life. They give you his innermost thoughts, his reactions to his environment and reveal a man refined, cultured and highly emotional. The journals are not meant for any eyes except his own. Hence they contain what we call 'atma katha', the story of his soul.

The neglect of other contemporary sources, particularly Marathi records such as selections from Shastri Daftar, Purandare Daftar, Peshwa Daftar, Marathi Daftar, etc., which have a number of references to Elphinstone, has made his study one-sided and nothing more than a compilation of extracts from journals and letters of Elphinstone linked by some comments of the author. Dr Choksey is aware that the journals fail to answer some of the questions which are vital to the understanding of the political scene of India (p. 45), but does not attempt to fill in the gaps by drawing on other sources.

The picture from the book is seldom complete. The author writes about Nagpur, but does not tell us what type of state it was and how it was related to the Maratha state. The statement that in 1811 all was quiet in Poona and there was not a ripple on the political surface (p. 136) is not correct. In fact, the situation was deteriorating and Bajirao was losing his ground. The book refers to the famous murder of Gangadhar Shastri which

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caused rupture between Elphinstone and Bajirao, but here again the account is neither full nor balanced and whatever has appeared in the journals of Elphinstone has been

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The book has not been properly planned. Instead of following a particular event Dr Choksey follows strictly the journals. Hence while writing about the Pindaris, he suddenly jumps to Elphinstone's views on Bertrand's history of the French Revolution or his interest in French poetry (pp. 67-8). This arrangement is perfectly all right in a journal or a diary, but certainly meaningless in a chapter dealing with his Residency at Nagpur. All the picturesque descriptions of his journey, his likes and dislikes, his schedules of works, etc., are interesting but irrelevant. Thus there is a lot of material in this book but no method to properly arrange or analyse it. Again, the author takes too much for granted and touches many points without describing them. For instance, he mentions the Vellore mutiny (p. 73) and assumes that his readers know all the details.

Dr Choksey should have attempted an assessment of the unusual and fascinating personality of Elphinstone in one full chapter. He showed remarkable self-restraint in difficult situations. Thus when in spite of his competence the Company chose to appoint Sir Thomas Hislop as commander of the Deccan forces against the Pindaris Elphinstone bore the humiliation with a single note in his journal, "I must never hint at my dissatisfaction, but keep silence" (p. 182). Similarly, Lt. Col. Velentine Blacker's silence in his book published in 1821 on Elphinstone's role in the British victory in the Maratha war of 1817-9, for which all credit was given to Sir Thomas Hislop, evoked the remark: "I had not overrated my own part in these transactions. I am pretty well reconciled to Blacker's silence" (p. 273). This is a rare virtue in a public servant holding the highest position in a state, but the author refers to this casually. On his appointment as Commissioner Elphinstone picked up a few people of his confidence to occupy important positions in the territories conquered from the Peshwa. James Grant (Duff), Pottinger, Briggs, etc., constituted the "family of Elphinstone". But when Chaplin succeeded him as Commissioner, the same harmony did not prevail. He started criticizing Briggs and others which caused a lot of bitterness among the officers (pp. 286-7). This shows the contrast between Elphinstone and Chaplin. The episode of Chief Justice Sir Edward West (chapter XXII) also brings to the surface the personal rivalries of European officers in India. Elphinstone's letter to Robertson indicating how an officer should behave displays his attitude towards his subordinates (pp. 289-90). Elphinstone remained a bachelor throughout his life. We find his views on marriage mentioned in these journals (pp. 187, 257). He was worried about his financial position after retirement and always calculated his savings and the interest that might accrue to him (pp. 148, 439, 447). Perhaps he shared this trait with other British officers in India. The Company was willing to offer him the governor-generalship of India in 1827, but as he put it, he "was determined to go while the going was good" (p. 448). All these scattered bits should have been pieced together to delineate the personality of Elphinstone.

The last part of the book contains Elphinstone's views on education, Press and social reforms in the Deccan. His minute on education "drips with wisdom, insight and sympathy for Indians" (p. 385). He held that the government should bear the cost of education and strove hard to convince the Court of Directors of the importance of educating Indians.

After a long argument the Company sanctioned a partial continuance of the Dakshna of the Peshwa out of which the famous Sanskrit College of Poona was created which later developed into the present Deccan College. These, however, are known facts. Elphinstone believed that "a free press is certainly among the noblest of human possessions" though he was compelled by force of circumstances to act contrary to his views (p. 399). He also believed in progressive Indianization of the government services. Long before Macaulay he had predicted that Englishmen would have to leave India one day or the other and this view was based on "reason" and not on "prejudice". He wished that Englishmen worked hard to make the land happier than they found it (p. 307). Elphinstone was an admirer of the indigenous institutions, particularly the panchayat system, which had fallen on evil days, especially under the last Peshwa (p. 454). He did not want to hurt the religious feelings of the Hindus, but he persuaded the people to abolish sati, infanticide and slavery (p. 429). He prepared a code of regulations popularly known as the Elphinstone Code, which was in vogue until it was replaced by the Indian codes in 1862-7.

The administrators of western India have used a number of Marathi words or pharses in their reports, journals, etc. A research scholar is expected to explain them in the footnotes or in an appendix or glossary. Dr Choksey does not explain the word hircarrah (p. 35) or hiccarras (p. 59) [it should be harkara which means a messenger]. But he gives meanings of such well-known words as pargana as "equal perhaps to a taluka" (p. 94), though pargana in the Deccan was equal to a modern district. Notes on personalities, events and places are absolutely necessary in a research work of this type, but these are missing from the book. An author from Poona should have explained the meaning of "the battle at the gates of Poona" (p. 45). Had he referred to Sardesai's works, he would have found that it was at Hadapsar, a village near Poona, that the battle was fought.

Dr Choksey does not take into account the works done by others on Elphinstone or this period of Indian history. Thus the works of Grant Duff, Sardesai, Cotton, etc., are not included in his inadequate bibliography. Grant Duff was a contemporary of Elphinstone and his account of the last years of the Maratha raj in which he had actively participated should have been consulted. If the author had used Riyastakar Sardesai's works he would have at least avoided the use of anglicized Marathi words and given the correct spellings in the footnotes, for example, Ramachandur for Ramachandra, Ramteg for Ramtek, Chateesgur for Chattisgad, Giukwar for Gaikwad, Kundi Rao for Khanderao, Corygaum for Koregaon, Nathoo for Natu, Maru for Mora, Fooltanba for Punatambe, etc. He refers mostly to his own works such as The Last Phase, The Aftermath, Raja Pratapsingh of Satara, etc., in the footnotes. His contention that Elphinstone underrated Grant's history of the Marathas is not valid. It is true that in his letter to Adam in 1824 he called it "the dullest history without a word of description or a sign of life" (p. 312), but Grant published his book in 1826 and incorporated in it all the suggestions for improvement made by Elphinstone, Briggs and others. Besides, this reference was mainly to the style of Grant and did not reflect Elphinstone's opinion on the quality and utility of Grant's work which is expressed in his earlier letters (pp. 308-12). In fact, Elphinstone was the most competent person to write the history of the Marathas, but being preoccupied with many other important tasks, he could not find time to give effect to this desire. When, therefore, he

heard from James Grant in 1819 that he was thinking of presenting a connected account of the Marathas he was very much delighted and gave all encouragement and facilities to him; moreover, he used Grant's book in his later work on Indian history.

Dr Choksey has no doubt made a useful study of Elphinstone, but as a biography of

the British statesman this is disappointing.

POONA UNIVERSITY

A. R. KULKARNI

B. K. Roy, The Career and Achievements of Maharaja Nanda Kumar, Dewan of Bengal (1705-1775) (Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1969). Pp. xii+276. Rs. 35.00.

The author has based his study on a variety of sources and consulted substantial unpublished material in English, Persian and Bengali. Among the sources are: (1) unpublished records of the East India Company's government in Bengal; (2) unpublished and published correspondence in Persian between the Company's government and the Nawabs of Bengal and their officers and other Indian powers; (3) records of the trials of Maharaja Nanda Kumar for conspiracy and forgery, published by the authority of the Supreme Court in Calcutta in 1776, and the record of the impeachment of Sir E. Impey; (4) additional manuscripts of the British Museum relating to the impeachment of Warren Hastings, correspondence between Sir E. Impey and Warren Hastings and Sir Robert Chambers and Charles Jenkinson; (5) correspondence between Colonel Clive and Nanda Kumar; and (6) works of a number of contemporary as well as later writers.

The author claims that Nanda Kumar "remained in the forefront of...political life" of Bengal after the death of Alivardi Khan, that "no systematic and connected history of the life and activities of such an important personality has been attempted", and that the present work is "an authentic account of the career and achievements of Nanda Kumar". The attempt of the author has been to show that the English, particularly Hastings, bore malice to the Maharaja; that his anti-English and patriotic character made him a suspect in the eyes of the English; that as an honest and able revenue officer he was averse to seeing Bengal plundered; and that, therefore, his trial was prejudiced and a "judicial murder".

There is no doubt that the trial was not fair, but it is difficult to agree with the conclusions of Dr Roy. If Nanda Kumar was really patriotic and anti-English, why did he remain faithful to Mir Jafar who had betrayed his master, Sirajuddaulah, and help the English? Again, if he was really patriotic, why was there no love lost between him and Mir Qasim, who was quite anti-British in his attitude. From a perusal of the book it appears that Nanda Kumar was an efficient and intelligent revenue officer, but shared in full measure the vices of the age. He was a typical civil servant, ready to lend his services to anybody who needed and paid for this. He also seems to have been an intriguer. He played into the hands of the three members of the Council—Francis, Monson and Clavering—who were opposed to Warren Hastings on personal grounds and not because of his role as the builder of the

British empire in India. If they gave no protection to Nanda Kumar when he was sentenced to death, he was himself to blame. In fact, his whole career was an unbroken record of intrigues in which he seldom succeeded.

Nanda Kumar seems to have been inordinately ambitious. His unbounded aspiration for wealth, status and fame constantly landed him in trouble. The charge of forgery brought against him might have been fake, the Supreme Court in Calcutta might have had doubtful jurisdiction in the matter, the particular section of the English law applied in the case might have been inapplicable to the citizens of Calcutta, and Maharaja Nanda Kumar might not even have been a citizen of Calcutta, as he was detained there against his will; but these considerations do not absolve him from his role in the intrigues in which his life abounded. One does not feel like holding with the author that Nanda Kumar had to lay down his life for his patriotism and continued opposition to the interests of the East India Company. Admittedly, the author has bestowed much labour and attention on the marshalling of facts and presentation of the subject-matter. But in spite of his sincere endeavour he has not been able to substantiate his claim. Nanda Kumar might have been a devout Hindu, and he might have spent a lot over the renovation of temples and upkeep of religious places, but crass self-interest animated him otherwise. That is why he remained with Mir Jafar, always sought a job under the Company and worked against Reza Khan. All pieces of evidence adduced in his favour by Dr Roy, in fact, go against him.

The language of the book leaves much to be desired. Many long quotations from the original, archaic English of the 18th century texts make dull reading. The gist of the paragraphs might have been more usefully given in simple modern English. The punctuation marks also have not been used with circumspection. The author could usefully revise the book before it is sent to the press for a second edition.

BIHAR UNIVERSITY MUZAFFARPUR

S. R. SINGH

W. S. DESAI, Bombay and the Marathas up to 1774 (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1970). Pp. xvi+248. Rs. 26.00.

The book provides a fascinating account of the growth of Bombay from a mere trading station to a centre of hectic political, military and commercial activity and its transformation into an important nerve-centre of British power in India. An important phase in the transition of this country from Mughal rule to British ascendancy is treated here, and the author sifts extremely valuable evidence largely untapped so far to throw light on some of the less known or inadequately interpreted facts of the formative period of British ascendancy in India. The unpublised documents such as consultations of the Councils, public and secret correspondence among the different factories and agents and the Court of Directors, letters to the country powers with their replies, reports of spies, envoys and others, diaries of events, etc.—honest contemporary records of facts—form the mainstay of the book and give it their own characteristic verve and objectivity.

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Professor Desai traces the evolution of British policy in western India from meekly putting up with "daily affronts, great indignities and often slightings" (p. 36) of the country power and "insolence of the Portuguese as well as of the Moors" (p. 37) to a resolve to uphold "our just rights and retrieve our honour" (Ibid). As the Court of Directors wrote to Bengal, "...we have no remedy left, but either to desert our trade or we must draw the sword His Majesty has entrusted us with, to vindicate the rights and honour of the English nation in India" (p. 38). The practical operation of this policy with regard to the Mughals, the Marathas and the Portuguese is sharply brought out by a judicious use of documents by the perceptive author; garrison diplomacy and gerrymandering replace warehouse politics, and the reader has a feel of the increasing power and changing personality of the East India Company and its sub-continental thrust. The book is significant for a revaluation of Anglo-Maratha relations, particularly problems of Maratha weakness and British opportunity, but as the story of the rise and expansion of British power in India is closely linked with the rise of Bombay to prominence, it also gives a wider view within a limited compass.

Among examples of occasional oversight may be cited such errors as the mention of chapter VII as chapter VIII in the contents (p. xi) and some variation in the titles of chapters I and IV here and in the body of the book. These, however, do not seriously detract from its merit.

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T. K. RAVINDRAN

B. K. SINHA, *The Pindaris* (1778-1818) (Bookland, Calcutta, 1971). Pp. iii+224. Rs. 25.00.

The present work has developed out of the author's Ph. D. thesis and is based on the unpublished records and official documents preserved in the National Archives and some state archives. For the first time it deals with the subject of the Pindaris in a comprehensive manner. It explains their origin and growth. It sketches their military organization and describes their main business, namely their predatory activities, in all its gruesome details. It studies their relations with the contemporary powers, especially the Marathas and the British. Finally, it points out how the British completely exterminated them. At the time of our struggle for independence any stick was good enough to beat the British with. As the Pindaris fought against the British, some Indian historians looked upon the Pindaris, if not as nationalists, at least as incipient nationalists. The time has now come to view the Pindaris in proper perspective, as is done by Dr Sinha. He regards the Pindaris as the most organized of the anti-social elements whom the British put down. But the British do not deserve all the credit for this humanitarian act, for the Pindaris became a force to reckon with because the British system of subsidiary alliances disbanded the armies of the Indian states and these unemployed soldiers swelled the ranks of the Pindaris. Thus the Pindari menace was in part a creation of the British policies after 1803.

The author's account of the Pindaris is based on contemporary sources. They were a motley horde of persons from different regions and of different castes and religions. The majority consisted of the Muslims. The Hindus who joined this organization belonged to the low castes. "It was remarkable that the women of almost all the Muslim Pindaris dressed like Hindus and worshipped Hindu deities". But the Pindaris had neither caste nor conscience.

Regarding their plundering expeditions, the author says that during the two decades (1798-1818) when they flourished they were as regular as the monsoons. "They brought little with them and their object was to carry as much as possible". They avoided fighting, as they came to plunder, not to fight. To offset the possibility of resistance they terrorized the population. At the very mention of their names people began to flee deserting their hearths and homes. The Cumbum Commission\* which enquired into the Pindari raid of the Northern Circars in 1816 has calculated that in this raid, lasting over eight days, 182 persons were killed, 505 wounded and 3,673 injured. It was a sheer massacre of unarmed and unsuspecting innocent persons, whose only crime was that they were supposed to have accumulated wealth and whom their government was unable to protect from these marauders.

But how did this nefarious organization come to assume such huge proportions as to terrorize not only ordinary persons, but also governments? In tracing its origin and growth the author accepts Irvine's explanation that the word Pindari means a man belonging to or coming from the region called Pandhar, a place somewhere between Burhanpur and Hindia on the Narmada. Following Tod (*Pindari papers*), Dr Sinha traces the main branch of the Pindaris from Nusru, a Muslim of the Tulaye or Turaye tribe who took service under Shahji, the father of Shivaji, in 1633. His grandson Gaziuddin Khan served under Baji Rao I and great grandson Gardi Khan came to be attached to Malhar Rao Holkar. Later on the Pindaris came to be divided into Holkarshahis and Sindhiashahis. Their territory extended for about 100 miles in length to the north of the Narmada. They got this area as grants from the Maratha chiefs, to whom they were a source of revenue and to whom they rendered military service.

Dr Sinha has divided the history of the Pindaris into two periods. From 1798 to 1803 they formed a part of the army of the Maratha chiefs and other chieftains such as the Nawab of Bhopal. They received no pay, but maintained themselves on plunder. But after 1803 the Marathas declined as a result of their defeat at the hands of the British. This helped the rise of the Pindaris in two ways. They became independent for all practical purposes and their numbers swelled by the addition to their ranks of the soldiers disbanded by the Maratha chiefs after they accepted the subsidiary alliance system. However, they had no ambition of establishing themselves as independent rulers. From 1803 onwards they became a serious menance to the greater part of central India from Mirzapur in the north to Guntur in the south and from Surat in the west to Cuttack in the east. The worst sufferers were the territories belonging to the Bhonsles of Nagpur and the Nizam which were looted again and again until they ceased to be profitable from their

<sup>\*</sup> Quoted in H. Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, iii, 5.

point of view, forcing them to invade British territory like Mirzapur (1812) and Northern Circars (1816).

The intensification of the Pindari activities coincided with the arrival in India of the Marquess of Hastings as Governor-General in 1812. He saw that the Pindaris had plunged central India into a state of serious disorder and insecurity. He realized that unless they were destroyed there could be no peace in that region. His difficulties in initiating action were twofold: he had to persuade the home government, which was afraid of incurring heavy expenditure, and he had to carry the Maratha states with him, which, though outwardly friendly to the British, were helping the Pindaris secretly. He succeeded in overcoming both the hurdles and by organizing a large expeditionary force he broke the back of the Pindari menace. He achieved still greater success in resettling the Pindaris as peaceful farmers.

The author gives a sober and balanced account of a subject neglected so far by historians. Its value would have been enhanced if he had given us a few maps showing the Pindari strongholds, the areas which suffered from their raids and the places where they were finally defeated. The work would have been more useful if it had been edited properly. A few printing errors have escaped the author's attention. Unfortunately, Dr Sinha has used only the English sources for this work. He has, however, promised that he would deal with the Marathi and Persian sources in a separate volume. Unless he does this, this work which is full of promise will remain incomplete.

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G. S. DIKSHIT

D. M. BOSE, S. N. SEN AND B. V. SUBBARAYAPPA (ed), A Concise History of Science in India (Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi, 1971). Pp. xviii+689. Rs. 50.00.

One would have expected that this 11-chapter book surveying the source material, different branches of science, views and concepts of the physical world and the résumé, compiled under the direction of National Commission for the Compilation of History of Sciences in India, would give the reader a systematic, balanced and scholarly account of the development of science in the country and underscore its characteristic features, strong points and limitations. This legitimate hope is far from being realized in the book which gives the impression of being disjointed and uncritical, and suffers from many of the weaknesses of the earlier attempts in this field.

Science as an intellectual activity differs from religious or philosophical activities in so far as it has no place for revealed knowledge. It is based on observation and elaboration of observation through experimentation. Further, logical analysis is not an end in science, but a tool to analyse observational and experimental results. Reading the book one may notice that the observational and experimental tradition of Indian science, as distinct from some scientific knowledge utilized by various religious systems, brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism, to perpetuate their ideology, does neither come to light nor is discussed adequately.

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The reliance on religious literature and the attempt to construct the history of science on the basis of ideas available in the religious texts have resulted in dismissing the naturalistic schools in two brief paragraphs rather unsympathetically. Consequently, many of the questions which are crucial to the understanding of science are not even raised, let alone an attempt made to throw light on or answer them. For instance, why could the experimental tradition not develop fully despite other developments in science in India? Why was the naturalistic tradition vehemently attacked and almost completely eradicated from India? Was the attack on the Charvakas, in so far as their philosophy was a direct challenge to the social system being built in the name of religion, philosophical or political? If the authors of the book had cared to glance at the most fascinating study of Greek science by Farrington, they would have realized the similarity of attack on the Charvakas by the religious philosophers in India to that made by Plato and his followers on the school of naturalists in Greece, in particular, on Anaximander and Epicurus, and in Rome on Lucretius.

Coming to the later period, in discussing the contributions of Jai Singh of Jaipur in astronomy, not only have the authors failed to place and evaluate these in the context of European developments in astronomy, but the reader is also often misled by description and implied suggestions. For instance, we are told:

Jai Singh's interest in astronomy was not merely theoretical. It was motivated by a strong desire to set up efficient modern observatories for improving upon the observational data and for producing more accurate astronomical tables (p. 101).

On the basis of knowledge of what could be called *modern* at the time of Jai Singh one would suppose that telescope and observatories built around this instrument might be called modern. If Jai Singh was modern, why did he not use the telescope? There is evidence that that Father Boudier, a French Jesuit missionary of Chandernagore and an able astronomer (p. 102), who was invited by Jai Singh had used the telescope in his observatories, including those of Jupiter at Jaipur. Like Jai Singh, the authors are silent about the latter fact. The basic questions regarding Jai Singh that despite his intellect, knowledge of astronomy and remarkable ideas he chose to ignore Copernicus, Galileo and Newton on the one hand and did not care to use telescope on the other remain unanswered. In the absence of critical presentation of the material an impression is left with the reader that Jai Singh's contribution was unique, but somehow it could not be a part of the mainstream of science.

The reason why these aspects are not touched and the development of science and technology in India is not placed in perspective is the reliance of the authors on religious literature and their shying away from the main questions of science in India. This is fully corroborated from the ideas presented to us in the ninth chapter. The views and concepts of the physical world discussed here are primarily those which had been developed and have come down to us through religio-philosophical systems and complete neglect of naturalist thinkers. Uncritical attitude is also reflected in the numerous references to Greek thinkers. The authors quote in the same vein both the naturalist philosophers of Greece and Plato. Plato, it may be stated, was most inimical to science, its diffusion and to the natural philosophers. He built a philosophical system based on political expediency which ultimately killed Greek science.

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This defect is not incidental and is reflected in the treatment of the subject throughout the book. The Renaissance in Europe, for example, evokes the remark, "The traditional and authoritarian views which held the ground for centuries were subjected to searching rational analyses and, as a result, the old theories began to yield place to new" (p. 486). To say that the scientific movement was a result of rational analysis of traditional views is to miss the point entirely. Whitehead in his analysis of the origin and growth of science (Science and the Modern World, London, 1942) has conclusively shown that the scientific movement was anti-rational in so far as it was a return to observation and to the study of and have relied on religio-philosophical knowledge to develop their study. To them history of science is the history of bits and pieces of information of different branches of science put together with an eye to the contemporary, commonly called modern, science. This is neither history nor science.

The book is unbalanced between ancient and medieval developments, full of omissions and mistakes, gives only superficial information and the overall impression is rather confusing and misleading. To cap it all, the enthusiasm shown for science policies of the British in India shows a total lack of understanding of what was developed and why? It is said that the camel is a horse designed by a committee. Perhaps the dictum applies to the book.

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# TRADE AND URBAN CENTRES IN EARLY MEDIEVAL NORTH INDIA\*

## B. D. Chattopadhyaya

Recent studies have shown that a major socio-economic change took place in early India roughly from the close of the Gupta period. This change is elucidated in terms of the gradual crystallization of a formation called "Indian feudalism",2 the origins of which are traced to the land grants of the pre-Gupta period; "and the two centuries preceding the Turkish conquest marked both the climax and the decline of feudal economy of India".3 As a new system, it is naturally assumed to have marked a departure from the early historical pattern. The economic implications of the suggested change are believed to be represented by a situation of increasing ruralization in which self-sufficient villages became the foci of production.4

This hypothesis has gained considerable strength from the substantive arguments put forward from time to time in the process of its elaboration. Two deductions, following from the idea of self-sufficient village economy, have been made: (1) decline of trade, including long-distance trade, and (2) decline of urban centres. The paucity of indigenous dynastic coinage, which suggests rarity of exchange at commercial levels, has been taken to substantiate the first point. 5 It seems to derive support from an analysis of some literary

For the most recent presentation of different facets of this change see R.S. Sharma, "Problem of Transition from Ancient to Medieval in Indian History", The Indian Historical Review, i, no. 1 (1974), 1-9; also his Social Changes in Early Medieval India (circa A.D. 500-1200) (Delhi, 1969).

<sup>2</sup> For the first important empirical study of early Indian feudalism see D.D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the first important empirical study of early Indian teudalism see D.D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the Study of Indian History (Bombay, 1956), chapter IX in particular; the most comprehensive work on it is R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, c. 300-1200 (University of Calcutta, 1965). For a bibliography on early Indian feudalism see R.S. Sharma and D.N. Jha, "The Economic History of India up to A.D. 1200: Trends and Prospects", cyclostyled copy, p. 29 ff.

R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, p.262. However, the chronology of Indian feudalism is not as yet precisely ascertained. While early indications of feudal development are traced to inscriptions of the late Sātavāhana period, that is, second century A.D. (Kosambi, op. cit., p. 276), the historians of medieval India apply the same term, albeit with reservations, to the Mughal economy, S. Nurul Hasan, Thoughts on Agrarian Relations in Mughal India (New Delhi, 1973), pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, pp. 127-34.

<sup>\*</sup> An earlier draft of this paper was read at a seminar on "Cities and Towns in Ancient India" organized in March 1974 by the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and India organized in March 1974 by the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta. My attention was later drawn by Dr Sanjay Chandra of the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, to E.M. Medvedev's "The Towns of Northern India during the 6th-7th Centuries (according to Hiuen Tsang)" in *India—Land and People*, Book 3 (vol. 14 of Countries and Peoples of the East), compiled and edited by I.V. Sakharov (Moscow, 1972), pp. 168-83. I am extremely grateful to Dr Chandra for this reference and also for translating the entire paper from the original Russian into English. Medvedev makes a thorough study of Hiuen Tsang, but my use of his account is limited, to the passages cited in the thorough study of Hiuen Tsang, but my use of his account is limited to the passages cited in the original draft of the present paper.

For a list of coin-types in circulation in the early medieval period see L. Gopal, Early Medieval Cointypes of Northern India, Numismatic Notes and Monographs, no. 12 (Varanasi, 1966).

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material as well.1 For the second point considerable support comes from a recent survey of the early north Indian urban centres, many of which reached a state of decay in Gupta and post-Gupta times.2

Even if, as suggested by the hypothesis thus outlined, trade and urban centres suffered a setback in early India,3 resulting in the growth of closed village economy over a considerable stretch of time, one cannot still view this validly in terms of "production for use" as opposed to "production for exchange". While, therefore, it is necessary to examine closely to what extent and in what precise form trade and urbanism survived in the post-Gupta period, the scope of the present paper is rather limited. Here only a few known documents have been picked up for detailed analysis-documents which bear upon the close link between trade and urbanization. These pertain to several distinct geographical regions and it can at least partly be tested whether what emerges from them will have uniform applicability for different parts of north India. In the final part of the paper an attempt has been made to review the entire problem of decline of trade and urban centres in the light of the documents selected as well as some other material.

The geographical areas to which the documents relate are (1) the Indo-Gangetic divide (2) the upper Ganga basin, and (3) the Malwa plateau. This location pattern is crucial since it is known that in at least two of them, the upper Ganga basin and the Malwa plateau, important urban centres had developed in the early historical period.7

We may start with a site in the Indo-Gangetic divide which, if at all it has to be given the label "urban", may at best be called an incipient urban centre. This site is Prthūdaka,

<sup>1</sup> L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, c. A.D. 700-1200 (Delhi, 1965), pp. 102-4.

<sup>2</sup> R.S. Sharma, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and post-Gupta Times", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 33rd session (Muzaffarpur, 1972), pp. 92-104.

- 3 This may have been so, but if the history of Indian feudalism extends from the second to the 17th-18th centuries, then it has to be reconsidered whether a relative decline of trade or urban centres really constitutes an essential variable in the study of this system.
- For the difficulty involved in thinking in terms of such a distinction see H.K. Takahashi in The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism (London, 1954), p. 35 ff; also the important remarks of Marx, "The extent to which produces on the control of th Marx, "The extent to which products enter trade and go through the merchants' hands depends on the mode of production... on the basis of every mode of production, trade facilitates the production of surplus products destined for each constant. of surplus products destined for exchange, in order to increase the enjoyments, or the wealth, of the producers (here the owners of products are meant)", who are specified as the "slave-owner, the feudal lord, the tribute-collecting state" etc. Catilel (F., v.) lord, the tribute-collecting state", etc., Capital (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1962), iii. 320-1
- 5 This need is also suggested in the important writings on Indian feudalism. Although Kosambi speaks of the "ominous spread of closed village economy" in the context of feudalism (op. cit., p. 288), he underlines the process of the "development of new trade centres" in his criticism of Marx's concept of the Asiatic mode (op. cit., p.11). R.S. Sharma has made a study of trade and urban centres in the context of early medieval feudalism, *Indian Feudalism*, p. 238 ff.
- <sup>6</sup> See O.H.K. Spate and A.T.A. Learmonth, India and Pakistan: A General and Regional Geography, 3rd edn (London, 1967), pp. 534 ff, 546, 625-7.
- <sup>7</sup> For the distribution of the important early historical urban sites of north India sec A. Ghosh, The City in Early Historical India (Simla 1972).

modern Pehoa in the Karnal district of Haryana. Prthūdaka is called an adhisthāna in an inscription (A.D. 882-3)1 of the Gurjara-Pratihāra period which also provides some details of a fair at this place in which different animals—the most important of which was the horse-were sold and bought. Several points emerging from this record are of relevance here. First, the horse dealers headed by a foreman (which suggests that the horse dealers were organized into a guild), were not local; they hailed from nine different localities: Cūtavārşika, Utpalika, Cikkariselavaņapura, Baladevapura, Śārankadika, Sīharudukkaka. Traighāṭaka, Ghamghaka and Aśvalauhavoka; one of these is tentatively identified with a locality near Lahore. Secondly, the dealers do not seem to have been non-Indian traders of that period, although horse trade is not usually associated with Indians in the contemporary sources.2 According to the editor of the record the names appear to be Hindu<sup>3</sup> and it is likely that some of them were brahmanas (for example, Vamuka or Bhatta Viraka's sons, Vanda and Rājyabala). The evidence of the Pehoa record may thus suggest that in the ninth century Indians of the north-west at least acted as intermediary dealers in horse trade and, if the guess regarding the participation by brahmanas in it is correct, the restrictions in the brahmanical texts4 weighed lightly on them. Thirdly, the donations which the horse dealers agreed to make went not only to a religious shrine at Prthūdaka, but also to Kānyakubja, Gotīrtha and Bhojapura—all widely distant from Prthūdaka. Fourthly, among the buyers of horses figure the king, thakkuras and provincials who were, however, not necessarily physically present at Prthūdaka. It would appear from all this that Prthūdaka was a focal point in the network of north-western horse dealers and although the record does not positively show it to be an urban centre, it may be labelled at least as a nigama—a market centre occupying a somewhat intermediary position between a village and a developed township. 5 This supposition seems to be confirmed by its characterization in the record as an adhisthana which, in Gupta and post-Gupta terminology, would signify an urban centre as well.6

Tattanandapura, identified with Ahar near Bulandshahar and situated on the western bank of the Ganga, was on the other hand a fully developed township of the upper Ganga

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G. Bühler, "The Peheva Inscription from the Temple of Garibnath", Epigraphia Indica, i, 184-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For countries from which horse was imported see L. Gopal, *The Economic Life of Northern India*, p. 113. The information that horse trade extended up to Bengal in the early 13th century and that Turkish invaders of Bengal posed as horse traders is given by *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*, tr., H.G. Raverty (New Delhi reprint, 1970), i, 557.

<sup>3</sup> G. Bühler, op. cit.

See Manusmṛti, x. 86, 89, and also Kullūkabhaṭṭa's commentary, which prohibit brāhmaṇas from participating in animal trade.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> A Ghosh, op. cit., pp. 38, 46-7.

Vaisali (modern Basarh in Vaisali district of north Bihar) which was an urban centre in the Gupta period was called an adhişthāna in that period, cf. the expression vaišālyadhişthānādhikaraṇasya, seal no. 25 in T. Bloch, "Excavations at Basarh", Archaeological Survey of Undia, Annual Report, 1903-4, p.109. Gopagiri (Gwalior), an urban centre of the 10th century, is mentioned in its records as an adhişthāna. It may be noted that by the time of Rājašekhara Pṛthūdaka was considered to be so important as to be mentioned as the point beyond which the northern region began, pṛthūdakāt parata utṭarāpathaḥ, Kāvyamimāṃsā, ed, G.S. Rai (Varanasi, 1964), chapter XII, p.264.

basin. It has yielded a set of 10 inscriptions dated between A.D. 867 and 904,1 which show it to have been included in the Gurjara-Pratihara empire. The urban character of the settlement emerges from a number of indications in the record. First, the suffix pura in its name and the fact that it was called pattana2 distinguish it from grāma, pallī or agrahāra by which village settlements of the period were known.3 Secondly, whatever meagre information is available regarding its lay-out confirms this. It was intersected by a number of roads, kurathyā (small or narrow roads, lanes?), brhadrathyā (big roads) and haṭṭamārga (road leading to the market area).4 Since such expressions have been used in relation to townships in early medieval literature, 5 some functional differences between them in the context of urban settlements may be inferred. The impression one gets from the records is that the eastern market area (purvahattapradesa) was one of the nerve-centres of the towns,6 dotted as it was with shops and residential buildings. The reference to the eastern market implies that there were several other such centres which, as is clear from the eastern market cluster, were not necessarily located in one part of the town, but were dispersed among different residential areas. The inscriptions mention six temples (those of Kañcanaśrīdevī or Kanakadevī, Nandābhagavatīdevī, Vāmanasvāmī, Gandhadevī, Dašāvatāra and Sarvamangala) which formed a distinct part of the urban set-up. At least two of them, enshrining Nandābhgavatīdevī and Kāñcanaśrīdevī, seem to have been located a little away from the town (ihaiva pattanādvahi dakṣinasyām diśi), but both owned property in the eastern market area. 7 Thirdly, the constructional details and dimensions of some of the buildings are given in the records in clear terms. Two types of buildings are generally mentioned: āvāris (shops and enclosures) and gṛhas (residential buildings). The āvāris seem in some cases to have combined the functions of a shop and a residential building. In one case an āvāri with its elevations is said to have consisted of three rooms of burnt bricks; in another it has a few inner apartments. 8 The grhas were also constructed with burnt bricks. The inscriptions abound in references to house sites (grhabhami) contiguously situated and belonging to persons of different castes.9

That Tattanandapura was an important urban settlement of the early medieval period is confirmed by archaeology as well,10 although no attempt at correlation between

<sup>2</sup> Ahar Inscription, nos. 1, 2, etc. (The numbers cited here refer to D.R. Sahni's edition).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> D.R. Sahni, "Ahar Stone Inscription", *Epigraphia Indica*, xix, 52-4; also C.D. Chatterjee, "The Ahar Stone Inscription", *The Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society*, iii, pt. iii(1926), 83-119. (I owe the second reference to Mr M.C. Joshi).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A.K. Choudhary, Early Medieval Village in North-eastern India (A D. 600-1200) (Calcutta, 1971), pp. 42-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ahar Inscription, nos. 4, 5, 6, etc.

<sup>5</sup> L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, p. 96.

<sup>6</sup> Ahar Inscription, nos. 4, 6, 7, 9, etc.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. no. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. nos. 2, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, pp. 56-8; plates X-XII. (I owe this reference to Mr B.M. Pande).

epigraphic and archaeological material is possible at present. The mounds at Ahar cover a total area of 3,800 acres and five trial trenches laid at the site are scattered over a stretch of nearly one and a half miles. At site B which dates back to about ninth century A.D. were discovered, apart from burnt brick structures of residential character, excellent specimens of pottery, hand-grinding mills, a mortar, household articles of copper, an iron scythe and early medieval coins of at least three varieties.

All the urban characteristics of Tattanandapura or Ahar revealed by epigraphy were present at Siyadoni near Lalitpur in Jhansi district. The dates of its records ranging between A.D. 907 and 9681 relate, as in the case of the other inscriptions cited, to the Gurjara-Pratihāra period. It was also a pattana intersected by a variety of roads, rathyā. hattarathyā, etc.2 The functional differences between different varieties of roads may be assumed here again; besides, there is clear mention in one case of a road belonging to the merchants (vanijonijarathyā).3 The residential sites included aparasaraka (houses with porch or vestibule), āvāsanikā (dwellings) and grhabhitti (house site) owned by different communities.4 The spatial dimensions of the town may be assumed to have been larger than those of Ahar, considering the number of its market centres. Five of them figure in the records: Dosihatta, Prasannahatta, Caturhatta (possibly identical with Catuskahatta of no. 25), Kallapālānāmsatkahatta (hatta belonging to the Kallapālas) and Vasantamahattakahatta (possibly named after the chief of a guild).5 Vithis or shops owned by merchants and manufacturers of different categories constituted the nucleus of a hatta, though not the entire hatta complex. Although, as in the case of the Kallapalanamsatkahatta,6 the entire hatta appears to have been owned by and to have specialized in the merchandise of the Kallapālas, this was not the general pattern. At Caturhatta, for example, the vīthi owned by grahapatika tāmbulika Keśava is mentioned along with that of a kamsāraka. 7 Nor was there any clear distinction between commercial and residential areas and in this regard too the lay-out was similar to that at Ahar. The residence of a brāhmana or a religious shrine could be a part of the total hatta complex. 8 As at Ahar, temples formed a part of the urban set-up; there were several of them at Sīyadoni dedicated to Nārāyaṇabhattāraka, Śivabhattāraka, Bhaillasvāmī, Sīgākīyadeva, etc.9 Sīyadoni was, however, primarily a commercial centre, as is suggested not only by the number of its hattas, but also by a customs house attached to it (sīyadonisatkamaṇḍapikā). 10 A mint also seems to have

<sup>1</sup> F. Kielhorn, "Siyadoni Stone Inscription", Epigraphia Indica, i, 162-79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. nos. 6, 7, 9, 10, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. no. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. nos. 3, 6, 7, 14, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. nos. 6, 7, 8, 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. no. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. no. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. no. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. nos. 1, 10, 14, 15, 20, 25, etc.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. nos. 2, 11, 27, etc.

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been located there. Siyadoni served as a political centre as well, but this point will be elaborated later on.

Though not quite close to Siyadoni yet in the same geographical region was Gopagiri (Gwalior) which, as the analysis of its two inscriptions dated A.D. 875 and 8762 shows, appears to have been a fort town. The settlement was administered by a chief of the boundaries (maryādādhūrya), appointed by a Gurjara-Pratihāra king. The second record refers to the presence at the fort town of a kottapāla, also appointed by the Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler, and a balādhikīta (commander of the army).3 The settlement seems to have covered both the hills and the plains, as suggested by an incidental reference to the dwellers of the plateau of Gopagiri (gopagiritalopari). Gopagiri was a commercial centre as well, as sresthis and sarthavahas were counted among its residents and as members of a local council. Two hattikās, Cacchikā and Nimbāditya, are mentioned as those parts of Gopagiri where oil-millers (tailikas) lived and on the strength of this indication it may be inferred that Śrisarveśvarapura and Śrivatsasvāmīpura, residential areas of several other oil-millers mentioned in the records, were also parts of the Gopagiri urban complex.

On the basis of the discussion so far some typological differences that seem to have existed between the four urban centres may be briefly reiterated. While Prthūdaka was perhaps not a fully developed urban centre (although the holding of a fair would imply a commercial status already achieved), Tattānandapura and Sīyadoni were certainly so. Some typological distinction seems, however, to have existed between the two. Despite some incidental references to a uttarasabhā, the meaning of which is not clear, and a dandapāšika or a dataka at Tattānandapura,4 the records do not mention any ruler or other important officials in connection with the town or its activities. At Sīyadoni on the other hand four rulers—all feudatories of the Gurjara-Pratihāras—are mentioned within a span of about 60 years. 5 The pancakulas, appointed by the rulers in each case, 6 represented the administrative body of the township; there are, besides, references to such officials as karaņikas and kauptikas.7 Sīyadoni was thus on all counts an important political centre of the Gurjara-Pratihāra empire. The point of contrast between Sīyadoni and Gopagiri would be that the latter's political importance was more military than administrative.8 The character of rule, suggested by the presence of a kottapāla and a balādhikīta, would

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. no. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> E. Hultzsch, "The Two Inscriptions of Vaillabhattasvamin Temple at Gwalior", Epigraphia Indica, i, 154-62.

<sup>3</sup> It is significant that while in connection with either Tattanandapura or Siyadoni no rajamarga (royal road) is mentioned (for resolution). road) is mentioned (for narapatipatha at Ujjayini see Meghadūtam, Pūrvamegha, 37), Gopagiri Inscription, no. 2, refers to śrībhojadevapratolyavatāre, "the descent of the road of Bhojadeva, the Guriara-Pratihāra ruler. the Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ahar Inscription, nos. 1, 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 1, 2, 11, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Gopagiri may thus well compare with the fortified settlements under the Pālas and Candellas listed by R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism* Appendix 17 by R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, Appendix II.

be a sufficient indication of this. Another significant piece of information is also available in the Gopagiri records, if the suggested interpretation of the relevant passages is correct. They record that a piece of land belonging to the village of Cūdāpallikā and the entire village of Jayapuraka were properties of the city (svabhujyamāna). This may suggest the measure of the fort town's control over the countryside, evidence regarding which is absent in other records.

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To what extent the suggested typological differences had a bearing on the nature and organization of the commerce and certain other related aspects at these urban centres cannot be satisfactorily made out from the records which are not primarily concerned with such matters. Only a few guesses can be made. What strikes as a possibility in the cases of Tattanandapura, Siyadoni and Gopagiri is that they were not planned townships—a point suggested by the disparate location pattern of the hattas which, as mentioned earlier, included shops, temples and residential buildings. There is no evidence that caste distinctions were made in the selection of residential sites.1 At Tattanandapura the house site of a brāhmana is mentioned as lying next to that of a vanik in the eastern market area.2 Similar evidence is available from Siyadoni. At Gopagiri the headmen of the oil-millers are mentioned in connection with two hattas and Śrīsarveśvarapura and Śrīvatsasvāmīpura, and this may again endorse the supposition that the latter two were hatta-cum-residential areas integrated within the township. At Siyadoni two types of shops are mentioned: (1) pitrpitāmahopārjita and (2) svopārjita.3 While the latter category suggests expansion of activities by the town's merchants, the former testifies to the antiquity of commerce at the hattas carried down family lines.

This type of evidence may be taken to suggest that before emerging as fully developed urban centres all these sites were central points in local commerce, an assumption which may explain the concentration of a number of hattas in one area. It was the process of the conglomeration of such hattas and residential areas which led to the initial urbanization of these settlements.4 Such a developmental process of urban centres would not, however, preclude the possibility of long-distance contacts; that such contacts did exist is borne out by all the records discussed here. At Tattanandapura lived (and got involved in local property transactions) the Varkkatavanik community from Bhillamāla (Bhinmal in south-

All the four inscriptions discussed here offer interesting insight into the working of the caste system at the urban centres: brāhmaṇas participated in the horse trade at Pehoa; at Tattānandapura a kṣatriya vaṇik was engaged in commerce (Ahar Inscription, no. 6); Sīyaḍoni and Gopagiri records mention respectively a brāhmaṇa tambolika (no. 17) and a kṣatriya cultivator.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ahar Inscription, no. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 13, 15, etc.

This seems to be more forcefully suggested by the evidence relating to Anahilapāṭaka, an early medieval urban centre in Gujarat, which consisted of 84 marts; cf. Kumārapālacarita cited by P. Niyogi, Contributions to the Economic History of Northern India (from the tenth to the twelfth century A.D.)

west Rajasthan), Gandhikavanik community from Mathura and also merchants from Apāpura, a place not yet identified. At Sīyadoni the presence of a mandapikā would imply outside trade contacts. The merchant community of Gopagiri included sārthavāhas who may be assumed to have headed long-distance commercial ventures. Considered along with other evidence relating to early medieval India,2 which includes the Pehoa record, such examples would testify to the existence of a network of trade routes cutting across boundaries of local commerce.

The three urban centres, Tattānandapura, Sīyadoni and Gopagiri, seem to have been different in certain respects from townships founded by rulers, to which reference will be made later. Apart from their process of growth, the Sīyadoni evidence may bring out the point of difference further. Although it was a political centre, its importance in that respect lay essentially in the fact that it was assigned to the feudatories (the town is referred to as paribhujyamāna a number of times)<sup>3</sup> of the Gurjara-Pratihāras. The assignment was perhaps not permanent, an assumption suggested by the mention of four feudatories within a span of 60 years and the absence in all cases of any reference to their predecessors. There is nothing surprising in an urban centre being assigned to feudatories. Document number 27 of the Sivadoni group of inscriptions clearly refers to a township, Rāyakka, made over to some brāhmanas by a prince of Mahodaya. Similarly in the 11th century one-half of a town along with a number of villages was assigned by Paramara Bhoja to a feudatory in the Nasik area (śrībhojadevaprasādāvāpta nagarasellakārddha-sārddhasahasragrāmānām bhoktā śriyaśovarmā).4

The fact that Siyadoni was an assigned area (and as a political centre it has to be viewed from this perspective) would not by itself have made much difference in the nature of its commerce. As commercial centres, the real points of difference among the townships—which would perhaps also explain the necessity and forms of communication among them-would emerge from the composition of their artisan and merchant groups. It may be assumed that the records leave out a number of social groups from their purview, but the most dominant groups do nevertheless seem to have been different at different urban centres. At Tattānandapura, apart from the Cāturvaidya brāhmanas, various vaņikjātis are mentioned: Vaņik Varkkatajāti, Lambakancukvanikjāti, Sauvarņikvaņikmahājana, Māthurajātīya Gandhikavaņik and Kṣatriyavanik. If any conjecture can be made from their recorded activities, the Sauvarnikamahājanas appear to have been the most dominant group. At Gopagiri apart from the śresthis and sārthavāhas, the nature of

<sup>1</sup> C.D. Chatterjee (op. cit., p. 102) suggests that Varkkata and Lambakañcuka, mentioned in the Ahar records, "refer to the different sections of the Gurjara stock".

A relatively early evidence would be the account of I-tsing who refers in the second half of the seventh century to many hundreds of merchants coming to central India from Tamralipti, A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago, tr., J. Takakusu (Oxford, 1896), p.xxxi; for other examples see L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, pp. 90-1; it is significant that the vaisyas who are believed to have become hardly distinguishable from the śūdras in the early medieval period were, as traders, urged by Medhātishi to got the state for its first products, period were, as traders, urged by Medhātithi to get themselves familiarized with the products, customs and languages of different countries (Ibid).

<sup>3</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 11, 20, etc.

<sup>4</sup> See R.D. Banerji, "The Kalvan Plates of Yasovarman", Epigraphia Indica, xix, 69-75; 11. 7-8.

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whose trade is not specified, are mentioned heads of oil-millers (tailika-mahattaka) who alone numbered more than 20 and heads of gardeners (mālika-maharas) who numbered more than 14. Social groups other than merchants and artisans were represented at Siyadoni by different types of rājapuruṣas (karanikas, kauptikas, etc.), brāhmaṇas and mātaigas (i.e., Candālas), but the records are concerned more with merchants and artisans: nemakavanik (salt-merchants), kumbhakāra (potters), kallapāla (distillers of liquor), kanduka (?), tāmbulika (betel leaf traders), tailika (oil-millers), śilākūṭa (stone-cutters) and lohavana (black-smiths?). Here, again, if any guess is hazarded, the nemakavaniks would stand out as the most important group.

Guild was the organization which integrated the activities, secular as well as religious, of the merchants and artisans. As in the early period, the term is śreni, which occurs in the Gopagiri inscriptions. The chief of each guild was a mahattama, as in the case of the tailikas of Gopagiri, or mahara, as in the case of the gardeners of the same place or the tāmbulikas of Sīvadoni.1 Perhaps the term grahapatika referring to a tāmbulika at Sīvadoni2 carried the same sense. The use of the term jāti in respect of some merchant communities at Tattanandapura raises certain problems regarding the organization of guilds in the early medieval period. It may be taken to suggest that guilds invariably corresponded to specific castes.3 However, if this was so, one would expect that not more than one guild, representing a group of merchants or that of manufacturers, would exist at an urban centre. The tailikas and gardeners at Gopagiri had, however, a number of chiefs and this fact along with references to a series of mostly religious activities undertaken by individuals and their family members may imply that guilds were organized more on family lines than in terms of all members of the same caste or even practitioners of the same trade. That they were united at certain levels is evident from such expressions as samastakallapālānām, samastamahājanena, samasta...śilākūtānām, etc.4 In any case one may perhaps think in terms of variations in guild organizations from a number of contemporary sources. That guilds cut across the frontiers of caste and narrow regions is suggested not only by the Pehoa record, but also and more forcefully by contemporary south Indian evidence.5

What is most difficult to reconstruct is the relationship between the merchants, artisans and officials because what brings them together in the records is religious donations and levies and not any economic transactions. Two separate pieces of information may, however, have some bearing on this point. At Sīyadoni the authority for levying contributions from the mandapikā was the local ruler or the pañcakula appointed by him. While the composition of the pañcakulas is not known except the names of individuals, both at Sīyadoni

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, no. 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. no. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, p.82.

Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 4, 11,20, 21.

For example, a record of c.A.D.800 from Mulgund speaks of four heads of a guild belonging to 360 towns, see A.S.Altekar, The Rashtrakutas and Their Times (Poona, 1934), p. 368 ff. for this and other cases. Viingand the control of the control of the cases. cases. Vijñāneśvara in the Mitākṣarā (ii. 30) defined a śreni as a guild of persons earning their livelihood by the same kind of labour, though belonging to different castes or the same caste, cited by R. Narasimha Rao, Corporate Life in Medieval Āndhradeśa (1967), p. 5.

and Gopagiri the actual sthānādhikīta or sthānādhiṣṭhita was the vāra which, as the Gopagiri evidence shows, was constituted by the śreṣṭhīs and sārthavāhas. Secondly, the temples which received donations in different forms either through official intervention or by arrangements initiated by their patrons were mostly built by merchants. Of the six deities at Tattānandapura two were clearly caste deities, Kanakadevī or Kāñcanaśrīdevī of the Sauvarņikamahājanas and Gandhaśrīdevī of the Gandhavaṇikjāti. At Sīyaḍoni too the shrines for Viṣṇubhaṭṭāraka, Bhaillasvāmī, etc., were all constructed by merchants.

Paradoxical though it may sound, it is the pattern of donations and more generally the activities centring round these temples that suggest the commercial ethos of these urban centres. While certain fields and villages belonging to the township were made over to the temples at Gopagiri (and here one temple was built by the local rulers), the contributions from the itinerant merchants at Prthūdaka were in the form of dharma. certainly a corruption of dramma, the most common coin-name in early medieval records.2 At Siyadoni such contribution was in the form of a daily levy of one quarter of pañciyakadramma at the mandapikā made over, under akṣaya-nīvī tenure, to Viṣṇubhattāraka enshrined by a salt-merchant.3 But another type of arrangement, of which the temple would be a beneficiary, was investment of a substantial amount of cash with a group of manufacturers (for example, record no. 11 at Siyadoni shows that 1,350 ādivarāhadrammas were deposited with the distillers of liquor who were to pay every month \{ \frac{1}{2}} of vigrahatungīyadramma on every cask of liquor). This type of investment, perhaps implied by the expression aparimitamulyena krtvā (i.e., having bought with excessive price), involved other groups of artisans and manufacturing communities at Sīyadoni4 and in all cases except a few (where it was not necessary to convert kind into cash) the purpose of such investments was a return in the form of a regular interest in cash.5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 1, 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G. Bühler (op. cit.) seems wrong in taking it in the sense of a tithe set apart for religious purposes; for a general survey of dramma in early medieval literature and epigraphs see R.C. Agrawala, "Dramma in Ancient Indian Epigraphs and Literature", The Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, xvii, 64-82; also L. Gopal, "Coins in the Epigraphic and Literary Records of Northern India in the Early Medieval Period", Ibid. xxv, 1-16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Sīyadoni Inscription, no. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. nos. 4, 5, 11, etc.

<sup>(</sup>for example, oil levied on the tailikas and garlands on the gardeners at Gopagiri; also Siyadoni record no. 22). Elsewhere contributions or interests on deposits realized even from the local manufactures were in the form of cash, as is clear from the arrangements made with the distillers of liquor at Siyadoni (nos. 4, 5, 11, etc.). Pehoa record mentions one type of coin, dramma, and Ahar inscriptions two: dramma and vinisopaka. Siyadoni records on the other hand give a much more comprehensive idea of the types of coins that circulated in the Gurjare-Pratihāra kingdom, not all of them necessarily representing indigenous or dynastic coinage, or even metallic currency: pañciyakadramma, yuga, vigrahapāladramma, varāhakayaviṃsopaka, ādivarāhadramma, kapardaka, vigrahapāliyadramma and dramma. What these names represented is at least partly known from Ahar finds of three types of silver coins (i) Indo-Sassanid, (ii) with legend śrī śrī vi or vigra (definitely identical with vigrahapāladramma) (ii) uncertain, possibly with a Bull device (Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, (iii) uncertain, possibly with a Bull device (Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, (iii) uncertain, possibly with a Bull device (archaeological survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, (iii) uncertain, possibly with a Bull device (archaeological survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, (iii) uncertain, possibly with a Bull device (archaeological survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-6, (iv), 56-8). A hoard of ādvarāha and vigraha type coins was found at Ahicchatra (Ancient India, 1925-6, (iv), whereas at Kashipur (Nainital district) early medieval currency is represented by the "Bull/Horseman" type (Indian Archaeology 1970-71 A Review, p. 41 ff).

It was the prospect of this form of regular return on investments which governed the most typical transactions, made on behalf of the deities, both at Tattanandapura and Sivadoni. Most of the Tattanandapura documents deal with purchases, with cash belonging to Kāncanaśrīdevī, of houses and house sites owned sometimes for generations by different communities (Cāturvaidya brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriyanvaya vaṇik, etc.). The deed of 99 years (navanavatipatra) through which such transactions were formalized assured the investor of varying types of sureties. In some cases, where initially the surety was of a limited kind. fresh arrangements were later made to transfer the entire property and thus the entire rent to the deity.2 At Sīyadoni although no clear references to such purchases3 are available (unless the expression aparimitamulyena kṛtvā refers to buying up of some kind of property), houses and shops were assigned in large numbers to various deities of the town.4 The purpose of such assignments was obviously to secure regular rent and the patterns at Tattanandapura and Siyadoni were identical, because in substance the rent accruing from the assigned houses and shops was the same as the return on the money with which houses were purchased.<sup>5</sup> As mentioned earlier, all these transactions revolved round the temple establishments at these two places, but one may not be entirely wrong in supposing that the trend was not substantially different in secular commerce.

### III

Prthūdaka, Tattānandapura, Sīyadoni and Gopagiri are useful examples -- and more so because of their chronology—of the continuity of inland trade and of urbanization associated with it in the early medieval period, but by themselves they can hardly answer whether or not the early medieval pattern was completely different from the early historical. For such an answer one may think of two sets of comparison between the two periods in following terms: (1) a comparison, region-wise, of the number of different categories of urban centres and of the social composition of population in them, and (2) a comparison of the pattern of trade and of petty commodity production. No such detailed comparisons, particularly in quantitative terms, are available and, given the nature of the data, are hardly likely to be undertaken. But then one can legitimately raise a question: if early historical economy had reached a certain level of urbanization and petty commodity production, what were the reasons for the apparent swing back to the state of "natural economy" in the post-Gupta period?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a relevant analysis of the Ahar documents see R. S. Sharma, "Usury in Early Medieval India (c.A.D. 400-1200)" in Light on Early Indian Society and Economy (Bombay, 1966), pp. 138-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ahar Inscription, compare 4 and 8 and 2 and 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See, however, Sīyadoni document no. 17, which refers to the purchase of a wataka which was assigned to śrī umāmaheśvara.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Siyadoni Inscription, nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, etc.

The term used in the two records is bhātaka. For the significance of the term see C.D. Chatterjee. op. cit., p. 92. See also Siyadoni Inscription, no. 24.

For a rather incomplete list of the urban centres of north India see P. Niyogi, op. cit., pp. 117-22; for several other references where such lists are available see R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism*, p. 245 ff; also Appendix of the references where such lists are available see R.S. Sharma, *Indian Feudalism*, p. 245 ff;

One possible explanation suggests itself in the form of the decline of trade relations with the West, indicated archaeologically by the gradual disappearance of the flow of Roman coins into India after the first three centuries of the Christian era. It should be noted, however, that the majority of the hordes of Roman coins relate to the first century A.D. and not later. 2 Secondly, although the relative prosperity of the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa-Sātavāhana urban phases3 may to some extent be linked up with Roman trade, it has to be remembered that "India had... lost its principal source of the precious metal (i.e., gold) just before the beginning of the Christian era"—a phenomenon which has been taken to explain convincingly the genesis of Indian contacts with South-East Asia.4 This may further show that the spate of gold currency throughout the Gupta period, despite its debasement in the later period of the empire,5 cannot be entirely attributed to trade with the West. because, if the chronology of the hoards of Roman coins is any indication, relations with that area had already declined by that period. In the post-Gupta period India was no doubt not a serious contender in the contemporary international trade,6 but so was the case even during the period of Roman trade. 7 However, the continued participation by Indians in this trade and the presence of non-Indian merchants, particularly the Tājikas and the Turuskas in different parts of India, are attested by a variety of sources. 8 The Arab conquest of Sind9 and the occasional raids in the western and central parts of India are initial indications of commercial motivations turned political.

Foreign trade, however, is not central to the argument here, as even a decline in foreign trade may not necessarily imply a decline in internal trade or petty commodity production.

- <sup>1</sup> R.S. Sharma, Social Changes in Early Medieval India, p. 2; Idem, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and post-Gupta Times", loc. cit., pp. 101-2.
- <sup>2</sup> E.H. Warmington, The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India (Cambridge, 1928), p. 272 ff; P.L. Gupta, Roman Coins from Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad, 1965), pp. 47-53.
- <sup>3</sup> R.S. Sharma, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and post-Gupta Times", loc. cit.
- <sup>4</sup> G. Coedes, The Indianized States of South East Asia (East-West Center Press, Hawaii, 1968), p. 20.
- <sup>5</sup> S.K. Maity, Economic Life in Northern India in the Gupta Period (c. A.D. 300-550), 2nd edn (Delhi, 1970), Appendix III.
- 6 This is the impression one gets from L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, chapters VI and VII.
- <sup>7</sup> In northern India, on which the focus of the present paper is, the pattern of trade seems to have been different from that in the south and local Indians were one among the many middlemen in the Indo-Roman trade; see G. L. Adhya, Early Indian Economics (Studies in the Economic Life of Northern and Western India, c. 200 B.C.—300 A.D.) (Asia Publishing House, Bombay. 1966), pp. 46-94.
- L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, pp. 113-5. Turuşkadanda, occurring commonly in the Gāhadavāla records of the Ganga basin, has been taken by a number of writers as a tax on Turkish settlers, see R.S. Avasthy and A. Ghosh, "References to Muhammadans in Sanskrit Inscriptions in Northern India—A.D. 730 to 1320", Journal of Indian History, xv, 171; also L. Gopal, Economic Life, pp. 116-8. It is well-known from the Arab geographers' accounts that the Tājikas or the Arabs were patronized by Rāṣtrakūṭa rulers, for which corroboration is available in the epigraphic records of the western Deccan. The Chinchani charter of A.D. 926 mentions that the entire mandala of Saṃyāna (Sanjan) was made over by Kṛṣṇa II to Madhumatī (Muhammad) of the Tājika community who conquered the chiefs of all the harbours of the neighbourhood on behalf of his master and placed his own officials in them, D.C. Sircar, "Rāshṭrakūṭa Charters from Chinchani", Epigraphia Indica, xxxi, 45 ff.
- This point has been made by M. Mujeeb, Islamic Influence on Indian Society (Meerut-Delhi-Kanpur, 1972), pp. v-vi.

The same applies to urban centres as well. It emerges from a number of recent discussions that the economic basis of the early urban centres of the Ganga basin was an agricultural surplus generated by new methods as well as expansion of cultivation<sup>1</sup> and by the gradual crystallization of a power structure which ensured the production of surplus.<sup>2</sup> A certain amount of commercialization of this surplus was necessitated by the presence of specialized labour and of surplus appropriating social groups which were not necessarily confined to the monarch, his kin and his officials. Viewed from such a perspective, it stands to reason that trade (and not necessarily foreign trade) and a power structure which needs it, and hence may promote it, are essential factors in urban growth. If foreign trade did not play a crucial role in the birth of early urban centres, a reduced volume of such trade may hardly be held responsible for their decay in the post-Kuṣāṇa or post-Gupta period.

Secondly, and this is more important, the decay of urban settlements coincides with, and in a number of cases even precedes, the period when land grants actually start proliferating.<sup>3</sup> This may preclude any possible connection between them, as the full impact of land grant economy, if any such impact is highlighted to explain the decay of urban centres,<sup>4</sup> ought to have taken some more time to assert itself. This point needs to be stressed, as decline of trade and of urban centres may not have logically followed from the types of assignments that were made in early and medieval India. For the present this has to remain at the level of a theoretical discussion, but it may be pointed out that some trends to the contrary have already been discovered. Of south-east Bengal, which initially as a peripheral area offers a good example of the working of land grant economy, Morrison writes:<sup>5</sup>

Such an extensive series of occupation sites...indicates a concentration of population whose food needs would have been met by the surplus production of the local agriculturists. There may well have been a commodity market with a currency to facilitate exchange<sup>6</sup> as well as the transfer of extensive lands to temples and monasteries to secure to them productive land from which their own food needs might be supplied.

An increase in the number of assignees with their bases at already existing urban centres perhaps served as an impetus to further urban growth and trade, as it seems to have done in Mughal India, 7 while their presence in rural areas could have created conditions for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R. S. Sharma, Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, pp. 57-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. Ghosh, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> So far as the urban centres along the Himalayan foothills are concerned, Medvedev points out (op. cit.) that the account of Fa-hien tallies with that of Hiuen Tsang.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> R.S. Sharma, Social Changes in Early Medieval India, pp. 3-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> B.M. Morrison, Political Centers and Cultural Regions in Early Bengal (The University of Arizona Press, 1970), p. 153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For currency in early medieval south-east Bengal see my paper "Currency in Early Bengal" to be published in the Journal of Indian History.

<sup>7</sup> I. Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalistic Development in the Economy of Mughal India", Enquiry, new series, iii, no. 3 (1971), 10; also A.I. Chicherov, India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries (Moscow, 1971), chapter III. It may be argued, of course, that conditions in Mughal India were completely different from those of early medieval times as Mughal India was characterized by "the separation of the crafts from agriculture and the town from the courntryside" (Chicherov, op. cit., p. 95), but then we are only thinking in terms of a theoretical possibility here.

what Medvedev calls "commodity-money relations". Thus rural market centres named after kings, like the Devapāladevahaṭṭa mentioned in a Nalanda inscription, or created by feudatories, like the market centre founded by Kakkuka in the Jodhpur area of Rajasthan, could and did emerge in the context of a land grant economy. A conglomeration of such haṭṭas could evolve, as shown by Tattānandapura and Sīyaḍoni evidence, into an urban centre where urban property along with marketed goods would become objects of commercial transactions. It may be mentioned that a good amount of Śilpaśāstra material on towns and town-planning, despite its being highly stereotyped, relates to the early medieval period and the ranking of houses prescribed by early medieval texts for princes and different categories of sāmantas may be accommodated within the framework of what they say about towns and town-planning.

One has at the same time to contend with the unassailable archaeological evidence, which shows that many of the important—and not so important—urban centres decayed in north India in the Gupta and post-Gupta times. An alternative way of looking at this process of decay would be to start with a study of the geographical distribution of the centres, for which, apart from archaeology, the travel account of Hiuen Tsang, which is regarded as a standard source for the first half of the seventh century, may be useful. Hiuen Tsang too refers to a number of decayed urban centres and in the Indus valley one such typical site was Śākala. Such sites were, however, much more numerous in the Ganga basin proper and the adjoining areas where a selected list would include Kauśāmbī, Śrāvastī, Kapilavastu, Rāmagrāma, Kuśīnagara, Vaisali and the capital of the Vajjis. The point to be noted in this account is that in many of the regions where these centres lay it was not only the townships which had gone into decay, but the "peopled villages"

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Epigraphia Indica, xxv, 335.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ix, 277-80. The inscription refers not only to the establishment of a hatta but also to the settling of merchants in it, hatto mahājanašca sthāpita(-).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For example, Samarānganasūtradhāra of Bhoja, ed, T. Ganapati Sastri and V.S. Agrawala (Baroda, 1966), chapters 10, 15, 18, 30, etc.; for a list of Śilpaśāstra texts see D.N. Sukla, Vāstuśāstra, i, Hindu Science of Architecture (Chandigarh, no date), p. 83. See also B.B. Dutta, Townplanning in Ancient India (Calcutta, 1925), passim.

<sup>8</sup> R.S. Sharma, Social Changes in Early Medieval India, pp. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> Medvedev (op. cit.) gives convincing reasons for treating it as a standard source.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> From the 10th century onward the accounts of Arab geographers and others contain much useful material, but they have not been used in this paper.

<sup>8</sup> S. Beal, Si-yu-ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World (Indian reprint, Delhi, 1969), i. 166-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid. pp. 235-9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. ii, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. pp. 31-2.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 78.

too were "few and waste". Hiuen Tsang seems also to have made a conscious distinction between a city and a town. With reference to the capital of the Vajjis, he remarked that"... the capital is ruined" and that "it may be called a village or town". His statement about Magadha has similar implications: "The walled cities have but few inhabitants but the towns are thickly populated". 3 It would appear from his descriptions that this distinction would also apply to the urban centres which he found surviving and some of them would come under his category of cities. Thus Kānyakubja and Varanasi may be definitely labelled as cities of his period. Both of them were "thickly populated" and "valuable merchandise was collected" at them "in great quantities".4 Urban characteristics were present also at a number of sites listed by Hiuen Tsang in the Indo-Gangetic divide, the Ganga valley and its extension, covering a recognizable stretch along the Himalayan foothills. At Thaneswara "rare and valuable" merchandise was brought from elsewhere;5 the chief town of P'o-lo-hih-mo-pu-lo was densely populated and most of its people were "engaged in commerce"; 6 at Kiu-pi-shwang-na too the population was numerous.

The survival of old urban centres or the emergence of new ones in these areas is attested by archaeology as well, although, owing to the insignificant progress made in historical archaeology so far, our information is scanty here. The most important representative of the old urban centres is Ahicchatra in Bareilly district, which reveals an unbroken sequence in the early medieval context.8 At Purana Qila in Delhi the Gupta, post-Gupta and Rajput phases show that here also the sequence was uninterrupted between the Kuṣāṇa and the Turkish periods, though the quality of the structures at these phases appears to have been poor.9 Atranjikhera in Etah district has remains of Gupta and post-Gupta times. 10 At Rajghat near Varanasi period IV lasted from A.D. 300 to 700 and period V from A.D. 700 to 1200.11 At Chirand in Saran district, representing the lower Ganga basin, a new occupational stratum was discovered in 1968-9 and the coins of Gangeyadeva and other metal objects marked it out to be the early medieval phase of the site. 12 Among the sites that appear to have emerged in the post-Gupta period, apart

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. i, 206; ii, p. 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. i, 183.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 198.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ibid p. 199. Excavations at Kashipur (Nainital district), generally identified with Hiuen Tsang's Kui-pi-shwang-na, have revealed imposing religious structures of the early medieval period; see Indian Archaeology 1970-1 A Review, p. 41 ff.

<sup>8</sup> A. Ghosh and K.C. Panigrahi, "The Pottery of Ahichchhatra, District Bareilly, U.P.", Ancient India,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>o</sup> Indian Archaeology 1969-70 A Review, pp. 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 1960-1, pp. 32-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 39. See also ibid. 1957-8, pp. 50-1, where period IV was dated between the fifth and eighth centuries and period V between the ninth and 14th centuries. 12 Ibid. 1968-9, p. 6.

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from Ahar, Sankara in Aligarh district may be mentioned. Structures at this site have been dated between c. ninth and 12th centuries.1

To return to Hiuen Tsang, the deserted and deurbanized areas of his account, so far as the Ganga basin and the adjoining areas along the Himalayan foothills are concerned, correspond to a stretch which was in early times intersected by a number of important trade routes. They connected Gaya, Pāṭaliputra, Vaisali, Kuśīnagara, Nepalese tarai. Śrāvastī and Kauśambī², precisely covering an area in which were located the most important urban centres which had decayed by Hiuen Tsang's time. No detailed history of these trade routes is as yet available, but the impression that they had decayed fairly early may still be tested by analysing the chronology of the sources in which some of them are mentioned. Mithila in north Bihar is believed to have been touched by eight trade routes: (i) Mithila-Rājagrha, (ii) Mithila-Śrāvastī, (ii) Mithila-Kapilavastu, (iv) Videha-Puskalāvatī, (v) Mithila-Pratisthāna, (vi) Mithila-Sindhu, (vii) Mithila-Campā and (viii) Mithila-Tāmralipti.3 From the direction of these routes their actual number may be reduced to three or four, but even so it is significant that not a single reference to them is of the early medieval period, perhaps suggesting that they had become defunct by that time. This apparently provides us an explanation as to why the urban centres in this area decayed. but it does not answer why the trade routes themselves had dried up.

There is another dimension to the problem already briefly touched upon and it bears upon the relationship between trade, urban centres and a stable political structure. The role of political organism in the formation of early historical urban centres has often been stressed to the extent that according to one writer "...if any priority is to be established, the ruler should get the credit because he happens to symbolize a power structure very necessary for the maintenance of any economic system represented by the merchants".4 The problem of the decay of urban centres has also to be viewed in this light. It is common knowledge that the mahājanapadas, within the framework of which emerged the urban centres of the Buddha's time, were not merely territorial structures but political structures as well.5 With regard to the urban sites along the Himalayan foothills, Medvedev's formulation that "with the dissolution of Kṣatriya oligarchical state-clan formations (gana) the Himalayan area lost its past political significance and came to occupy the position of an unimportant outlying province of economically advanced north Indian states".6 may be only partly true. 7 But it is significant that even in the Ganga basin and the Indo-Gangetic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. 1960-1, pp. 32-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D.D. Kosambi, op. cit., p. 132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Md. Aquique, Economic History of Mithila (c. 600 B.C.-1097 A.D.) (New Delhi, 1974), pp. 141-4.

<sup>4</sup> Dilip K. Chakrabarti, Review of The City in Early Historical India by A. Ghosh, Journal of Ancient Indian History, vi, pts. 1-2 (1972-3), 314-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See H.C. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, 6th edn (University of Calcutta, 1953), part i, chapter III: also A. Choch or air chapter III; also A. Ghosh, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The oligarchical states disappeared as a result of Magadhan expansion, but archaeologically the region, including the Napples (1997) and later, region, including the Nepalese tarai, is well-documented down to the Kusāņa period, if not later,

divide there is in the post-Gupta period no substantial evidence of any well-knit kingdoms, apart from the ephemeral empire of the Vardhanas. Even in this short-lived empire two urban centres, Thaneswar and Kanauj, stand out in the account of Hiuen Tsang and in Harṣa's time they were important political centres as well. Instances of early medieval rulers establishing new townships abound in literature and in epigraphs and they cover such widely distant regions as Kashmir, Rajasthan and Bengal. Tattānandapura, Sīyadoni and Gopagiri, although not founded by any ruler, are all examples of townships which emerged along with the rise of the Gurjara-Pratihāra empire.

This, however, does not guarantee that the rise of a kingdom or an empire would necessarily bring in trade and urbanism. We have as yet no substantial evidence of either, for example, in the long-lasting kingdom of the Eastern Cālukyas of Andhra. And despite political vicissitudes a number of traditional urban centres survived; such survivals were the measure not of the stability of a kingdom but of (i) some important trade routes and (ii) the location of a traditional seat of manufacture at the centre. A single but representative example would be Varanasi, which was not only located on a traditional artery of trade, the Ganga, but was also an important centre of textile and ivory products in the early historical period. As a centre of textile manufacture, its importance continued down to carly medieval times. When new centres emerged in different regional contexts—and studies on early medieval India have to think in terms of such possibilities—the pattern of petty production was not substantially different from that of earlier times. Of the most important guilds of early historical times at least seven existed at Tattānandapura, Sīyadoni and Gopagiri, those of the goldsmiths, the stone-masons, the braziers, the oil-pressers, garland-makers, potters and caravan traders.

Debala Mitra, Excavations at Tilaura-kot and Explorations in the Nepalese Tarai (The Department of Archaeology, Nepal, 1972), p. 15; also R.S. Sharma, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and post-Gupta times", loc. cit., p. 97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Rājatarangiņī, iv. 10; v. 156, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Epigraphia Indica, xviii, 87-99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Rāmacarita of Sandhyākaranandī, v. 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See B. Srivastava, Trade and Commerce in Ancient India (from the earliest times to c. A.D. 300), Appendix A. pp. 278-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> L. Gopal, "The Textile Industry in Early Medieval India", Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay, 1964-5, p. 103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See R.C. Majumdar, Corporate Life in Ancient India, 3rd edn (Calcutta, 1969), chapter I, pp. 15-7.

For a list of 18 guilds mentioned in Jambudoipaprajñapti see A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat (Bombay, 1956), pp. 263-4; also L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, chapter IV.

# THE ROLE OF BROKERS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

## A. Jan Qaisar

The brokers, acting as middlemen between buyers and sellers, formed a highly specialized commercial group in medieval India. With the advent of Muslims in India, the brokers were generally termed dallāl, an Arabic word. No Sanskrit term for broker appears to have existed.1 The quick acceptance of the foreign word (dallāl) by the Indians perhaps might be an indication that this institution is, in its pure form at any rate, an importation; it also suggests the key role that the brokers played in trade in the Islamic world at that time.

The root of the word dallal is dall, which means "He, or it directed; directed aright; guided..." Therefore, a dallāl is he who "directs the purchaser to the merchandise. and the seller to the price". In fact the dallal is identified with the simsar who "is the man known as a dallal; he shows the purchaser where to find the goods he requires, and the seller how to exact his price".4

Though theirs was a most maligned community and the ubiquitous "tribe" was looked upon with contempt and suspicion, 5 their services could not be dispensed with. The growth of the profession in a period of slow and uncertain means of communications and transport is understandable. The brokers acted as a link between the producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. In all the larger markets they were equally sought after. Foreign merchants in particular had to depend on them to a great extent.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E.W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon (Edinburgh, 1867), Book I, part 3, s.v.

<sup>4</sup> Encyclopedia of Islam, op. cit. Also Lane's Lexicon, op. cit. Compare Barani, Tārīkli-i Feroz Shāhī (henceforth, TF), ed, Shaikh Abdur Rashid, ii, 144 (Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University) where the bushes in University), where the broker is said to lend assistance to both the buyers and sellers.

Another word, jallāb, equivalent to dallāl, seems to have been confined to dealers in animals, especially the horses (cf. Tekchand, Bāhar-i' Ajam, s.v. jallāb, jallāb band and jallābi. Also see Abul Fazl, Akbarnāma, iii, pt i, tr., Beveridge, 378, fn.).

Varthema is the first European traveller in India who mentions the word dallāl in a slightly upt form in the early 16th as 169, corrupt form in the early 16th century (cf. Travels of Varthema, ed, Badger, Hakluyt Society, p. 169, fns. 1 & 2) fns. 1 & 2).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For a broker the English-Sanskrit Dictionary (ed, Monier-Williams) gives the Sanskrit word ghataka (s.v. Broker). But it is clear from the references cited in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary (s.v. ghataka) that the ghataka was actually a matchmaker and not a commercial middleman. Incidentally R. Shamasastry casually renders the words dhāraka and māyaka (māpaka?) as middlemen, which is quite misleading (cf. his English translation of the Arthaśāstra, Mysore, 1967, Book IV, chapter II, section 206, p. 235). (I am grateful to my friend and colleague, Dr S.R. Sarma of the Department of Sanskrit, Aligarh Muslim University, for the above references).

Ibid., s.v. dallāl. The word dall also means, "He gloried in, or boasted of, certain properties or peculiar qualities" (Ibid., s.v.). This fits in with the role of the brokers. As an example, compare The Encyclopedia of Islam, new edition, ii, s.v. dallāl, "...the dallāls frequently recommended to purchasers goods which they knew to be inferior". But the consensus of the scholars seems to prefer the first signification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Cf. Barani, op. cit., where they are called "arrogant, rebellious and audacious" (p. 14) and the market-people (hāzāriyan) in government. market-people (bāzāriyan) in general are showered with invectives like "shameless, bold, cunning debauch,...liars..." (p. 147).

Evidence on the functions of the brokers in our Persian sources for the period from the 13th to 16th century in India is very sketchy as compared to those available for the 17th century. Only Barani, while describing Alauddin Khalji's measures of price control.1 sheds some light on a few aspects of their position and role. And that too is limited to the Delhi market alone. He describes the dallāls generally in their role as mediators between buyers and sellers, taking their commission from both the parties.2 We are, however, not informed of the amount of their commission. Barani aptly observes that in a sense the brokers were the "rulers" (hākimān) of the market and considers them as a cause of the higher prices of commodities. Elsewhere he suggests that with the brokers' co-operation a Sultan could bring down the prices and check regrating. This is an index of the crucial role played by the brokers in the market at the capital in the early 14th century. Barani uses the term mihtrān-i-dallālān<sup>7</sup> (chief brokers), which indicates some kind of organization or guild of the brokers in Delhi, though details are lacking. These chiefs received very rough treatment from Alauddin during the course of implementation of his measures for price control. Many of the chiefs, along with horse dealers, were sent away to distant fortresses from Delhi, as they were suspected of being in league with each other, raising at will the prices of horses.8 The chief brokers were severely punished and penalties were inflicted on them, so much so that "they longed eagerly for death".9 Notwithstanding all these harsh steps, the Sultan all the same procured their services for the fixation of prices of horses for the army.10

Alauddin's procedure of price fixation of general commodities was based on the principle of "production cost" (nirkha bar hukm barāward ashia) but allowing the profit of "the producer". 11 Keeping in view the brokers' role in inflating or depreciating the prices and the fact that the Sultan consulted them in connection with fixing the prices of horses, it would not be presumptuous to suggest that he might have solicited information on the "production cost" of every article from the brokers who had a detailed knowledge of the same.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> TF, pp. 143-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 144. Barani uses the tendentious word rishwat (bribe) for commission.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In the Middle East the brokers charged 2 per cent as commission (cf. Encyclopedia of Islam, s.v. dallāl).

<sup>4</sup> TF, p. 144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 144,145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Cf., M. Habib and Mrs Afsar Khan, The Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate (Kitab Mahal), p. 45 (translation of Barani's Fatāwā-i Jahāndārī, Advice XI).

<sup>7</sup> TF, pp. 144,145.

<sup>8</sup> TF, p. 144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 145.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. pp. 143, 144-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See Barani, Tārīkh-i-Feroz Shāhī (Bibliotheca Indica), p. 316. Shaikh Abdur Rashid's edition (op. cit., p. 147) does not contain the relevant sentence. Cf. Habib and Mrs Khan, op. cit., p. 35 (translation of Barani's Fatāwā-i Jahāndārī, Advice IX, on price control: "The King should settle before his own thrope the price of call this respective to the principle of production cost") and also fn. 2 for own throne the prices of all things according to the principle of production cost") and also fn. 2 for Professor Habib's opinion.

However, Barani's account leaves a number of aspects unexplained. For example, if Alauddin's goal was to stop the practice of taking commission, what could have been the means of livelihood of the brokers in Delhi? In such a situation the entire profession itself would be in jeopardy in the capital.

Undoubtedly the brokers of Delhi suffered an eclipse under Alauddin, but it could not have made any impact on them in other towns and places. They came into their own after Alauddin Khalji's death and indeed during the reign of Feroz Shah Tughluq the brokers not only recovered their lost ground but also gained certain concessions from the state. The Sultan claims to have abolished a number of "illegal" cesses or taxes during his reign and one of them was dalālat-i bāzārhā. It meant that either the dallāls had to take a licence from the state to carry on their profession for which they had to pay a tax or fee or they were required to pay a cess probably for every transaction (wholesale).2 The remission of such a tax on the brokers might have lessened their temptation to raise the price in order to compensate the loss in the form of the tax they had to pay earlier to the state for each deal. (The remuneration was calculated in proportion to the price at which an article was sold or bought through their mediation). We do not know when such a cess or tax was imposed on the brokers since our sources are silent about it. However, by the time of Feroz Shah, as K.M. Ashraf points out, "the business rules and practice of brokers were sufficiently important to find a place in the legal compendium of the reign". The Fight Feroz Shāhī laid down that if a broker had negotiated the sale of a commodity and the deal could not materialize, the broker, not being at fault, was not bound to refund his commission.4 Thus by the end of the 14th century the Delhi Sultanate provided legal protection to the brokers which was a far cry from the days of Alauddin Khalji.

The state's recognition and rehabilitation of the brokers could be presumed to have continued unabated during the subsequent centuries since there is nothing contrary to it; and by the end of the 16th century, during Akbar's reign, they came to be associated with the market affairs by the state itself. One of the duties of the kotwāl was to appoint a chief and a broker for every occupational group in each mahalla or quarter of the city; they were expected to make a general supervision of the selling and buying in the market. No transaction was to take place without the knowledge of the brokers, the mīr-i mahalla and khabardār-i

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Futuhāt-i Feroz Shāhī, ed, Shaikh Abdur Rashid, op. cit., p.5.

While the term dalālat-i bāzārhā has been interpreted to be "a tax on brokers" by Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, Hodivala takes it to mean "the brokerage on the transactions in the market" (cf. Qureshi, Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi, Lahore, 1942, p. 228; Hodivala, Studies in Indo-Muslim History, Bombay, 1939, p.340). Hodivala's opinion is not correct, since the nature of the taxes or cesses abelied by Feroz Shah does not warrant it:brokerage could not have been a tax imposed by or exacted on behalf of the state. The word dalālat means "the occupation of a dallāl" (see Lane, op. cit., s.v.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. Encyclopedia of Islam, s.v. dallāl: "In the time of the Mamluks, the 2 per cent commission which from the earliest days had been paid to these brokers was made subject to a charge, as a result of which the dallāls had to give up half of their profits in taxes: the loss, naturally enough, he speedily passed on to his clients".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> K.M. Ashraf, Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan, reprint (Jiwan Prakashan), p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 108, fn. 4.

<sup>5 &#</sup>x27;Ain-i Akbari (text) (Bib. Ind.), i, 284.

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mahalla; in case of default fines were imposed. Also, the names of the buyers and sellers were noted in the roznāmcha (daily report) of the market. An instance during the 17th century shows that the state appointed a "town broker" for market transactions; he recorded the types and quality of goods purchased and sold (wholesale), their prices and also the names of both the sellers and buyers.

### II

As compared to the preceding period, a larger mass of material concerning the activities of brokers is available for the 17th century. The coming of the European companies to India gave a tremendous impetus to trade and commerce in the country, thus providing a wider field for the brokers. The foreign merchants, unacquainted as they were with the country's pattern of marketing and language, had to depend on the native brokers for their business transactions. The English chaplain, Ovington, wrote in the 1690s: "For the Buying and more advantageous disposing of the Company's goods, there are Brokers appointed, who are of the Bannian caste, skilled in the Rates and value of all the commodities in India". Fryer aptly observes that "without these, neither you nor the natives themselves shall do any Business". Earlier in 1634 the English factors referred to the custom of the country that "it is most usual to effect business which is at distance by a faithful broker". Therefore, it is not surprising to find that practically everyone who was interested in trade—professional merchants, European companies, the Mughal emperor, princes, nobles, governors and even the weavers—had his own broker to look after his interest.

With the brisk commercial activities at the ports, especially during the 17th century, it was natural that the inland centres of production and commerce too would get involved with the country's international commerce. The need of establishing contacts with such centres was felt both by the Indian and foreign merchants and this in turn gave rise to a well-organized group of brokers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Syed Nawab Ali (ed), Mir'āt-i Ahmadī (text) (Calcutta, 1928), i, 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Foster (ed), The English Factories in India (EFI), 1642-5, p. 301.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cf. Fryer, A New Account of East India Company (Hakluyt Society), i, 217-8. The English East India Company encouraged its factors by monetary rewards to learn the Indian languages in order to avoid leaning too heavily on the Indian brokers, but this was not a great success.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> J. Ovington, A Voyage to Surat, ed, Rawlinson (London, 1929), p. 233. Another Englishman remarked in 1704 that it was "usual to hire one of the inhabitants" to do the business for the strangers so as to avoid "being imposed on by persons, that often buy what they never intend to pay for", cf. Charles Lockyer, A New Account of Trade (London, 1711), p.17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 212.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 79; cf. Purchas His Pilgrimes (Hakluyt Society), iv, 296. Also see Caesar Frederick's account in the Principal Navigations (Hakluyt Society), iii, 206-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Cf. EFI, 1622-3, pp. 148, 153, 163-4, 184; EFI, 1630-3, p. 116; EFI, 1634-6, pp. 264-5, 290, 314. Also S. N. Sen, ed, Travels of Thevenot and Careri (New Delhi, 1949), pp. 77-8.

The bulk of the brokers were Hindus, of the vaishya caste, generally called "banians"; by foreigners. Tavernier advised his countrymen to select a broker "who should be a native of the country, an idolater and not a Musalman, because all the workmen with whom he will have to do are idolaters".2 Even the Muslims preferred Hindu brokers.3 The reason is not far to seek; most of them came from the bania families, who, in the words of Fryer, "were expert in all the studied arts of thriving and insinuation" and they well understood "the constant turning of cash amounts".4

It seems that the Hindu brokers were generally organized on family lines. The head of such a family of brokers was selected for his age and experience; he held "all the joint property in trust to turn it to account" in order to "secure benefit to all the kinsmen". Every evening when they returned from business, they assembled at one place to render an account of what had been done during the day and for consultation for future.6 We can reconstruct a clear picture of the profession organized on family lines, at least in two cases, from English factory records. There were two well-established families who usually worked for the English Company: one was headed by Chhota Thakur and the other was the Parak (Parakh) family. The earliest mention of a member of the family of Chhota Thakur, called Jadu, was made in 1612; he served Hawkins (1608) at the Mughal court and also Sir Henry Middleton.7 Jadu's kinsman, Gourdas, was the brother of Chhota Thakur.8 Two kinsmen of Jadu are mentioned to have been working as brokers in Sindh.9 Chhota Thakur himself was appointed the "Chief broker" of the English Company at Surat<sup>10</sup> and he tried to bring his relatives "by degrees" in the Company's service. His relatives worked for the Company at Agra, Ahmedabad, Sindh and other places.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand three generations of the Parak family<sup>13</sup> served the English Company at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. Tavernier, Travels in India, ed, Crooke (London, 1925), ii, 144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies, ed, Foster, i, 97. One gets an impression from the English factory records that the Hindus greatly outnumbered the Muslims, Parsis and Armenians. Also see Pelsaert, Jahangir's India, tr., Moreland and Geyl (Cambridge, 1925), p. 78.

<sup>4</sup> Fryer, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Tavernier, op. cit., ii, 26. Probably the Parsis had a similar organization (cf. EFI, new series, ed. Fawcett, 1674-84, p. 260).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Tavernier, op. cit., ii, 26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Purchas, iv, 123; EFI, 1630-3, pp. 28, 155.

<sup>8</sup> EFI, 1630-3, pp. 90, 208. Another kinsman was Kalyanji, a broker of the English Company (cf. Peter Mundy, Travels, Hakluyt Society, 1914, ii, 25).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 160.

<sup>10</sup> EFI, 1646-50, p. 276.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> For Tulsi Das Parak and his father see *EFI*, 1651-4. pp. 42, 106, 142; *EFI*, 1665-7, p.171. For Bhimli and Kalyan, sons of Tulsi Das, see *EFI*, 1668-9, p. 85 fn.; *EFI*, 1630-3, pp. 209, 287; *EFI*, 1634-6, pp. 76, 169, 272, 278, 292-3; *EFI*, 1670-7 (new series), pp. 218-9, 238-9, etc.; *EFI*, 1678-84, pp. 290, 326-7, 345-6. For "Vekhy Parracke", *EFI*, 1665-7, p. 214. For Nima Parak, *EFI*, 1670-7, p. 183. For Mahi Das Parak, *EFI*, 1630-3, p. 246. For "Hacka Parracke", *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 86.

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different places in India and one Somaji Parak was sent to Mokha in 1643 as the Company's broker there. Besides these two families, there were many others. A few brokers of the English Company are reported to have served for very long periods, varying from 20 to 50 years.

A large number of Indian brokers, mostly Hindus, were employed by the merchants at foreign ports and commercial centres such as Gombroon<sup>4</sup> (Bandar 'Abbās), Basra,<sup>5</sup> Bandar Rig<sup>6</sup> in Persia and other places. There too the profession was organized largely on family lines<sup>7</sup> and it may be safely inferred that many of the brokers were connected with the reputed broker families in India. <sup>8</sup> Incidentally the majority of the banias in Gombroon came from Sindh.<sup>9</sup>

However, it was not possible even for the large and well-established broker families to cope with the expanding demand for business deals and search for untapped centres of production and market on the part of European companies and Indian merchants. This economic need led to a further development in the organization of brokerage in two respects. First, the chief brokers started employing persons other than their kinsmen as their subbrokers, under-brokers or assistants to meet the shortage of "man power" in the family; 10 the chief brokers were held liable for their sub-brokers 11 for which they received an extra

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For example, the family of the "Panjew", the English broker at Ahmedabad, whose "brethern" worked in Sindh (EFI, 1634-6, p. 138). Ananti Ram, the Company's broker at Agra, whose son lost his life in the service of the Company at Khurja (EFI, 1651-4, p. 112). "Bemuldas" and his kinsmen worked as brokers both at Dabhol and Surat (EFI, 1634-6, p. 259). Narayan, his brother Keso and Keso's son Nanabhai worked at Surat (Foster, ed, A Supplementary Calendar of Documents & c., 1600-1640, London, 1928, p. 47); EFI, 1634-6, p. 85. Naranji and his son worked at Broach (Suppl. Calendar, p.47).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Purchas, iv, 123; EFI, 1630-3, p. 275; EFI, 1634-6, pp. 172, 265; EFI, 1661-4, p.111.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For Tulsi Das as the English broker at Gombroon (*EFI*, 1637-41, p. 310). For Jaichand of Surat as the English broker (*EFI*, 1646-50, pp. 153, 209, 216, 223; *EFI*, 1651-4, pp. 188, 210, 228, 244-5; *EFI*, 1655-60, pp. 171, 223). He was replaced by "Thakursi" of Sindh (*EFI*, 1651-4, pp. 188, 228, 245, 269; also cf. Fryer, op. cit., ii, 329). In 1662 Thakursi was replaced by Santokh Becharaj (*EFI*, 1661-4, p. 75). Also see *EFI*, 1651-4, p. 228, for "Perwana", his son and Kalkadas. Fryer refers to one "Nokada Biram" as the Dutch broker (op. cit., p. 329); for the English brokers see Fryer, op. cit., pp. 180, 324.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For Shankar as the English Company's broker at Basra (EFI, 1642-5, p. 168).

<sup>6 &</sup>quot;Bania brokers" at Bandar Rig serving the French Company (Abbe Carre, Travels, iii, Hakluyt Society, 835).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Cf. EFI, 1642-5, pp. 168-9; EFI, 1651-4, p.228.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Fryer, op. cit., p. 167.

In 1650 the English factors at Swally reported that Chhota Thakur had "his creatures" besides his relatives "in almost all other employments of yours abroad and at home" (EFI, 1646-50, p. 276). One of Chhota's agents, Hari Mehta, was in Goa (EFI, 1634-6, p. 167). Deodas in 1662 was reported to have been an "assistant" of Chhota Thakur (EFI, 1661-4, p. 90). "Veckhy Parracke" had his "agent" in Malabar, named Tulsidas Surji (EFI, 1665-7, p.214). In 1674 Bhimji Parak's "sub-broker" was working at Dharangaon (EFI, 1670-7, p.236). In 1683 Kalyan Parak was reported to have employed an "under-broker" (EFI, 1634-6, p. 293). For a general remark on the sub-brokers, cf. EFI, 1637-41, p. 225).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Cf. EFI, 1661-4, p. 90; EFI, 1670-7, p. 236.

commission (one per cent) from their clients. And secondly, there arose the institution of "partnership" between two or more reputed brokers.2 Lack of details does not warrant assumptions about the exact nature or structure of these partnerships. But we do have one reference to a "family partnership". When Bhimji Parak entered the service of the English Company along with his three brothers, it was as follows: Bhimji as the eldest had eight shares, Kalyandas had five, Kisso and Vitaldas had four each<sup>3</sup>. The big brokers also appointed a separate accountant or secretary of their own.4

The brokers could be broadly divided into four categories: first, those who were the regular employees of the merchants, companies or others; secondly, those who worked for more than one client simultaneously; the third category comprised those who took on business deals strictly on an ad hoc basis. 7 and might be called broker-contractors; and fourthly, the state-appointed brokers at commercial centres to register the sale and purchase of articles. 8

Apart from these categories, there appears to be a tendency among some Indian merchants to welcome their appointment as brokers of European companies. In 1650 Deo Das, the English broker at Broach, was replaced by "Hera Vora". The latter was the son of "Assa Vora", a Parsi and one of the principal merchants at Broach. He accepted the job "mere for the reputation of it in that place than the benefitt hee receiveth". 9 In another instance "Sheikh Mercar", a prominent merchant of Calicut, acted as the broker of the English Company. 10 Abbe Carre speaks of a well-established Indian merchant at Surat, popularly called Samson, who served as a broker to the French Company. 11 In the 1690s a very wealthy Parsi merchant of Surat, Rustam Manock, worked as a broker for

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. 236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The best example of a partnership was that of Chhota Thakur and "Somaji Chitta". Both belonged to Surat and incidentally the houses of both of them were burnt by Shivaji's men in 1670-1 (cf. EFI, 1661-4, pp. 212-3; EFI, 1668-9, p. 33; EFI, 1661-4, p.98). Tapi Das of Baroda had two brokers of the same town as his "partners and respondents" (EFI, 1618-21, p.98); one Trikam Das worked as an "associate" of an English broker at Broach (EFI, 1630-3, p.101).

<sup>3</sup> See Ashin Das Gupta, "The Merchants of Surat, C. 1700-50" in Leach and Mukherjee, ed, Elites in South Asia (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 210-1.

<sup>4</sup> Ovington, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The chief brokers of the English Company were called the "Chief house broker" or "broker general" (cf. EFI, 1646-50, p. 276; EFI, 1630-3, p.246).

In 1635 Kalyan Parak acted as the broker of the English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood an Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood an Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood an Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood an Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and also as an agent of Mirza Mahmood and Indian marks of English Company and Indian marks of English Marks of English Company and Indian marks of English Marks of Engl Mahmood, an Indian merchant (EFI, 1634-6, pp. 292-3). In 1638 a broker is reported to have been in the service of both the English and Dutch companies (Mandelslo, Travels in Western India, ed, M.S. Commissariat, Oxford, 1931, 241). Commissariat, Oxford, 1931, p.41). In the 1690s a Parsi merchant, Rustam Manock, worked as broker for three European companies (cf. Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, "Rustam Manock & etc.", 7BBRAS vi 1930)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Cf. EFI, 1661-4, pp. 188-9; EFI, 1665-7, p. 263; EFI, 1668-9, pp.7-8.

<sup>8</sup> At "Jellepore" in Oudh the "towne broker" registered the sale and purchase of the commodities (EFI, 1642-5, p.301) 1642-5, p.301).

<sup>9</sup> EFI, 1646-50, pp. 325-6.

<sup>10</sup> EFI, 1670-7, pp. 322, 342 fn.

<sup>11</sup> Abbe Carre, op. cit., iii, 781.

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the European companies.<sup>1</sup> Such instances might be a fair indication of the profession having risen in esteem, especially if the client was a powerful European Company.

Another significant development that took place owing to substantial expansion of the market was a degree of specialization in the brokers' functions, that is, some brokers specialized in dealings in a particular line of business or commodity.<sup>2</sup>

### III

The brokers performed a variety of functions besides the primary job of procuring goods at cheaper rates for their clients and arranging sale of the clients' goods at a higher price. In the second half of the 16th century, we are told, the brokers at Cambay welcomed the foreign merchants, had their goods unladed and after paying the customs conveyed the goods to the house where they had already made arrangements for the lodging of the merchants.3 They subsequently struck business deals with the consent of the merchants. During the 17th century, when Surat had become a great commercial centre, the brokers there are reported to have "swarmed" the Swally Road on a ship's arrival and forced themselves on foreign merchants for taking on bargains on their behalf. They gave a helping hand in getting the goods laded and unladed and assisted the merchants in counting their bales of goods on the ship. 5 On the one hand they helped the European companies in procuring goods of the Indian merchants for their ship, "in making upp the freight" and on the other they obliged the Indian merchants by getting accommodation aboard the ships. 6 But it seems that the assistance given to the foreign merchants in the 17th century in providing them with lodgings was not much needed, at least at places where the European companies had established their headquarters, though it was needed at other places. 7 One may gather from the scattered accounts that the brokers were also associated with payment of customs at ports and tolls on roads. 8 They advised their clients on the exchange-ratio of different currencies, regional variations of weights and such other items. 9 It is true that the merchants employed a sarraf also for matters connected with

<sup>1</sup> Modi, op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In 1632 Peter Mundy refers to one Ganga Ram of Patna as the "chiefest Broker in their parts for corse linen". (*Travels*, Hakluyt Society, ii, 146). In the early 18th century Girdhardas and Vanmalidas, two brothers, were brokers for a particular kind of silk cloth called *patal* at Ahmedabad (See Ashin Das Gupta, op. cit., p. 216, fn. 1). Dr Das Gupta aptly calls them commodity-brokers and suggests that they were in direct touch with primary producers while the "general broker" (chief or big broker) did not himself deal in everything, "perhaps in nothing at all" (op. cit., pp. 215-6). But our study (see sections 3 and 4) does not agree with his suggestion since chief or big brokers like Chhota Thakur and Somaji had direct contacts with primary producers in the 17th century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Caeser Frederick's account in the *Principal Navigations* (Everyman's Library), iii, 206-8.

<sup>4</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 290.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 162.

<sup>6</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 119 fn.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Tapi Das provided the English factors with a "houseroom" at Baroda (EFI, 1622-3, p. 150).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Cf. Supplementary Calendar, p.66; EFI, 1622-3, p. 179; EFI, 1651-4, p. 114; EFI, 1661-4, p. 90; EFI, 1668-9, p.228.

Danvers (ed), Letters Received & etc., ii, 250.

currency, credit bills, etc., but sometimes the same person acted in both capacities or worked as a broker and sarrāf alternately.

The brokers were a great help in the opening up of new areas of trade for their clients. In 1635 when the English Company intended to extend its activities to Sindh, the factors first wrote letters to the "brokers there resident, who returned encouraging replies". Again, in 1673 when the Company wanted to "open a secure way of trade for Bombay" in the Deccan towns such as Junnar, Aurangabad, Hubli and Bijapur, it sent its broker, Vaghji, to discover prospects for trade at these places. Similarly Beni Das, the English broker, was sent to Bijapur in 1652 for commercial negotiations.

Even in the normal course the brokers had to go to distant places in search of goods for their clients. When they were on such business tours, say, for clothes, they would carry with them the "patterns" or "approved samples", as required by their employers in order to show them to the weavers to prepare clothes accordingly. Apart from the weavers, they had to maintain contacts with the "washers, beaters, dyers, nay to the very packers, indeed in everything..." They were also expected to buy goods, for example, cotton yarn, brought by the petty traders to the client's warehouse.

However, there were other intermediaries besides the ordinary brokers between the primary producers and the merchants, although their transactions were normally channelized through the brokers themselves. In 1665 we hear of certain "contractors" in the Malabar area whom the English Company's brokers contacted for the supply of pepper. These "contractors" would go "up country." for the purchase of pepper from the cultivators and thus relieve the brokers from some unwanted labour. The former must have made their gains from the difference in the purchase and sale prices. Moreover, the broker in this particular instance refused to go up-country himself when asked by his client, as the bargain was cancelled on account of the contractor's demand for advance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chhota Thakur, an English broker, had "encroached" upon the office of Tulsi Das, the English sarrāf, and "taken away his duties" (EFI, 1651-4, pp. 106-7). Beni Das worked as broker and sarrāf for the English Company (EFI, 1651-4, pp. 37, 41, 119, 142).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Thus Tulsi Das acted as the English broker at Gombroon in 1641 (EFI, 1637-41, p. 310), and as sarial at Surat in 1646 (EFI, 1646-50, p. 36). Tapi Das worked as a broker in 1619 at Baroda (EFI, 1618-21, p. 98) and as sarrāf at Surat for the English Company in 1642 (EFI, 1642-5, p. 21).

<sup>3</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p.117.

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1651-4, pp. 37, 41, 46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Peter Mundy at Patna "sett Brokers to seeke out for course Ambertees" (op. cit., ii, <sup>145-6</sup>). The English brokers were sent to Gokul (Mathura) to obtain the required variety of clothes (*EFI*, 1642-5, p. 300). Beni Das was sent from Surat by the English Company to Tuticorin, Raibagh and Rajapur (*EFI*, 1646-50, pp. 15, 54, 289).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p.87; EFI, 1661-4, p. 111; Also John Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings of the Early Seventeenth Century", Lalit Kala, no. 5 (April 1959), 19, 21, 29; cf. Vilhelm Slomann, Bizarre Designs in Silks (Copenhagen, 1953), pp. 112-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 111-3; EFI, 1634-6, p. 287.

<sup>9</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> EFI, 1665-7, p. 94.

money. Probably the broker's refusal was partly a result of his unwillingness to disturb the marketing pattern of that area and partly of his fear of opposition from the contractors. In another instance in 1622 one Ji Ram Shah is reported to have supplied goods to the English Company and he is said to have had a broker of his own, named Hira.1

The clients often gave the brokers a large sum of money for investment, which they generally "put out" to weavers or spent on direct purchase of ready-made goods. In 1622 a Dutch broker, Trikam Das, went to Agra with bills of 5,000 mahmudis.3 At Broach in 1623 the English brokers were given 4,800 mahmadis for "necanees" (cloth) and 7,200 mahmadis for broad baftas.4 Again, Valji, the English broker, was sent to Bhatkal in 1664 with 1,500 pounds in "gold" to buy 300 tons of pepper. 5 However, the practice of giving large advances to the brokers was disapproved by the English Company6 since it led to certain abuses on the part of the brokers.

The brokers who had become regular employees sometimes attempted to oblige their client even at great personal risk. Thus when the English broker, "Pangue", had conveyed the English goods from Broach to Surat despite the temporary restrictions put on the English trading activities in 1623 by the Mughal authorities at Surat, he was arrested and "soundly chawbucked". 7 Around the same year Kalyanji, who had been furnishing the English Company with goods from Baroda, was also imprisoned for the same act. 8 But ways were found to bypass such restrictions. In 1619 when the "governor" of Baroda banned the English trade there, the Company advised its factors to leave money with the "securest brokers that underhand may provide the goods you appoynt and send them securely to Barroch", quite understandably in their own names as a cover. 9 When in 1654 the "governor" of Surat stopped two English ships from leaving the port on suspicion of smuggling the English broker tried to oblige his client by offering to forfeit 100,000 rupees if his client had "anything to do with the junk". 10 The brokers had to face other hazards such as the unwarranted robbing of their goods by the men of a Mughal official in his pargana.11 In 1636 on receipt of the news of the capture of an Indian ship by the English Company the latter's broker at Agra, Dhanji, was imprisoned in retaliation by the Mughal officials.12

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1622-3, pp. 163, 184.

For example, see Streynsham Master, The Diaries of Streynsham Master, 1675-80 & c., ed, R. C. Temple, Indian Records Series, ii, 14-5 for such transactions by the brokers and pāikārs in Bengal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EFI, 1622-3, pp. 163, 184.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 249.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 342.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p. 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> He received 100 lashes, cf. *EFI*, 1622-3, pp. 290, 294, 295.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 116.

<sup>9</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p. 98.

<sup>10</sup> EFI, 1651-4, p. 281.

This happened to Chhota Thakur and the Company later demanded compensation for the same from the "governor" of Surat whose men were involved in the robbery (EFI, 1655-60, p. 313).

EFI, 1634-6, p. 278. Also see EFI, 1646-50, p. 258, for the imprisonment of Beni Prasad, the English broker, in Bijapur for 14 days for other reasons.

The clients sometimes engaged the brokers for certain odd jobs such as the recovery of outstanding debts.<sup>1</sup> The brokers often advanced money to their clients,<sup>2</sup> sometimes even free of interest.<sup>3</sup> In this connection the name of Tapi Das Parak was especially referred to by the English factors in glowing terms. He came to their rescue with money "when elsewhere it was not procurable but upon farr worse conditions".<sup>4</sup> He is also reported to have spent his own money on their account when the Company was "so deeply in debt".<sup>5</sup> In 1634 he advanced 4,000 riāls<sup>6</sup> and also gave a bill on Agra (from Surat) for 50,000 rupees at "one half per cent losse".<sup>7</sup> On another occasion he along with other Surat merchants stood sureties for 107,000 rupees in favour of the English Company.<sup>8</sup> But the highest amount ever advanced to the Company was by Beni Das, another English broker, the amount being 200,000 rupees at 5/8 per cent interest per month.<sup>9</sup> Such large amounts of money advanced by the brokers to clients were actually raised in the market.<sup>10</sup> The brokers were also helpful in getting things done through their access to princes or nobles.<sup>11</sup>

As a rule the brokers at the headquarters of their clients or other places were expected to keep and maintain the detailed records of business deals for occasional check-up by their employers. In 1630 the factors at Surat refer to a variety of such business records, namely, the daily "cash booke", "journall" and "laidger", which in the Gujarati language were called nana mal danio, avaro and khata respectively; other records mentioned are the "washers booke" and "market bookes". 12 In one instance the "journall" has been called rozanama. 13 It appears that the records were usually preserved by the brokers for more than three years. 14

The foreign merchants' dependence on the brokers was partly due to the language problem, which obliged them to engage a linguist (dobhāshī). Many brokers seem to have acquired a working knowledge of one or two European languages. In 1639 Mandelslo speaks of a broker of Cambay in the service of the English and Dutch companies who

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1634-6, pp. 79, 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Two kinsmen of Jadu, the English broker, provided the factors with money in Sindh (EFI, 1630-3, p.160). Money was borrowed from Tulsi Das Parak by the English Company (EFI, 1634-6, p.285). For Somaji and Chhota Thakur see EFI, 1661-4, p. 112; EFI, 1668-9, pp. 33, 189, 195, 208.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The English broker, Jaichand, at Gombroon gave an interest-free loan to the Company (*EFI*, 1646-50, p.223).

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 226.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 103.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 240.

<sup>9</sup> EFI, 1651-4, p.119.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. EFI, 1670-7 (new series), pp. 238-9; Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 791.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. EFI, 1622-3, p. 20; EFI, 1651-4, p. 112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Cf. *EFI*, 1630-3, pp. 101-2. For avro and khataunī see H.H. Wilson, Glossary (Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1968), s.v. The term nana mal danio is not available in Wilson. However, nanaya or nanya means coin or money (cf. Wilson, s.v.). Also see kharda, op. cit., s.v.

<sup>13</sup> EFI, 1651-4, p. 113. For roznāmcha see Mirāt-i Ahmadī, i, 169.

<sup>14</sup> EFI, 1630-3, pp. 101-2.

knew Portuguese.<sup>1</sup> The English records refer to one Dhanji who was the Company's linguist in the 1620s and was paid 36 rupees per month for his job.<sup>2</sup> He preferred to remain a linguist for some time despite the Company's persuasion to become its broker,<sup>3</sup> but yielded in 1636 and accepted the job of a regular broker.<sup>4</sup> In the 1690s Ovington mentions a bania of Surat who could manage to speak English; incidentally Ovington has also preserved the broker's words which could be the earliest recorded specimen of spoken "Indian English".<sup>5</sup>

We get a faint trace of the development of some kind of a commercial language along the western coast—a mixture of various languages—as a result of concourse of the merchants of diverse nations. For historical reasons it had the impress of Portuguese more than that of any other language, which is clear from its being designated as the "Negro Portuguese" by the English factors in 1634. Although it failed to continue for long, the brokers did play a role in the development of such a language. 7 But the language barrier was not that easily broken. We are told that the Surat brokers were at a disadvantage in dealing with the merchants in the Malabar area as the regional language was "Greek" to them. 8

An interesting but crude method adopted by brokers to fix business deals between the seller and buyer has been referred to by foreign travellers. The broker took the right hand of the seller, covered it up (including his own) with his long garment and "without saying a word or giving any other sign, he presses the fingers of this hand, and this in a way to refer to hundreds or thousands, it being agreed that each finger means one hundred or one thousand, and similarly, by the same arrangement, tens or even units". The same was repeated with the buyer and the price was fixed. But this practice must have been confined to "south India" or mainly to the western coast, since it was not noticed in north India.9

It is worth recording that the chief English broker, Bhimji Parak, asked the Company in 1671 to have a printer sent from England to help him in putting "some of the ancient Braminy writings in print", offering to defray the wages of the same. The Company Lent one Henry Hills three years later with a printing-press to Surat. On an inquiry being made by the Company about the venture in 1676 the Surat President replied that "the design had not met with the success expected by Bhimji, although he had gone to great trouble

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mandelslo, Travels in Western India, p. 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. 228.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 240. <sup>4</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 203.

Ovington, op. cit., p. 192. The bania commented on the practice of monogamy of the Christians: "English Fashion, sab, best fashion have, one wife best for one Husband".

<sup>6</sup> Cf. EFI, 1634-6, p. 74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The English factors make it explicit that they conversed with their brokers and other people in that language.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EFI, 1678-84, p. 425.

Varthema, op. cit., pp. 168-9. He gives the account with reference to Calicut in the early 16th century. Also Francesco Carletti, My Voyage Around the World, tr., H. Weinstock (Methuen & co. London, 1965), pp. 205-6. Carletti, a Florentine merchant, was in Goa in 1599.

and expense in contriving ways to cast the Banian characters in the English manner". The explanation given was the "inexperience of the printer in this sort of work" and he suggested that a type-caster should be sent out at Bhimji's expense. Later it was reported that Bhimji had parted with the printer because of the latter's refusal to teach Indians how to print. We do not hear anything more again. One does not know whether Bhimji's objective was to use the printing-press in maintaining the business registers and records in the Gujarati language or to put it to some other uses. Whatever his objective might have been, Bhimji, a broker, just missed the chance of becoming the pioneer in introducing the printing-press in India.

### IV

As regards the earnings, that is, wages, remunerations and commissions of the brokers, we hardly get any evidence before the 17th century, except an indication of the practice that they took something from both the parties, namely, the buyers and sellers. It seems that ordinarily the total commission of a broker amounted to two per cent of the value of each transaction, one per cent being taken from each party. Thus we are told that in 1636 (and earlier) the English Company gave one per cent to their brokers at Baroda and for the same transaction the weavers gave the same amount to their own broker, "soe that they never paid more than two on both sides". But if one single broker negotiated the deal for both the parties, he took "what hee pleaseth", which normally amounted to two per cent. In the 1670s Fryer says with reference to Surat that the brokers "for the Company, and private persons... are allowed two per cent on all bargains".4 But in the 1690s Ovington notes that "To these is allowed three per cent for their care and trouble". 5 There is no point in speculating whether there could be a rising trend in the brokers' commission in the last decades of the 17th century. It seems that Ovington is referring to the earnings of the chief brokers who were allowed an extra commission of one per cent for the liability of sub-brokers employed by them.6 Yet in irregular ways the rate could rise sometimes beyond the average two per cent even in ordinary circumstances. The factors in 1616 reported that while they paid the brokers one per cent, the latter charged the buyer also "one, if not two, per cent in addition".7 This implicitly shows that the brokers at times took three per cent in total from both the parties. Again, in 1616 the Swat factors instructed their men at Nosari to be watchful about their broker, "Pangue", so that he might not "take 2% or more" from the buyer. 8 But the rate of commission charged

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1668-9, p.85, fn.2; EFI, 1670-7, pp. 131, 274.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. 285.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EFI, 1634-6, pp. 264-5.

<sup>4</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 217.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ovington, op. cit., p. 233.

<sup>6</sup> See supra, section II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Supplementary Calendar, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 77.

by another category of brokers, that is, broker-contractors was astonishingly high—10 to by another that the transactions in these cases involved a large amount of investment—approximately 30,000 ruppes in each case. Moreover, the goods (cloths) had to be supplied within a stipulated time, probably urgently required to coincide with the departure of ships. It is also to be noted that the transport charges were to be reimbursed by the client.1

From one instance we can infer that the rate of brokerage was not always uniform for all the commodities. Thus in 1620 the English factors at Patna reported that by the "Nabobes Comande" the brokerage on all the variety of silk was fixed at "5 annes of a rupve per cent" (5/16 per cent) from the buyer and "10 annyes" (5/8 per cent) from the seller, while with regard to cloth (silk? cotton?) the brokers could not claim anything from the buyer, "onlye his curtizye", but he realized from the seller "half a pice per rupve" (a little over one per cent?). The factors also add that the official rate with regard to silk was violated by the brokers since they "usialye" took half per cent from the buyer and one per cent from the seller.2 The point to be emphasized is that the seller, who was probably also the primary producer, was made to pay more than the buyer in both the examples cited above, thus showing a certain bias in favour of the traders. Moreover, if the word "clothe" meant a silk and not a cotton fabric, then it would assume an additional significance, that is, a distinction was made between the two phases of production-silk yarn and silk cloth. From another instance we learn that while buying a particular kind of cloth the buyer did not pay any brokerage, but the seller had to give "five pices in eatche peece of what price soever". Out of these five pices, we are told, the brokers took two pices, "two pices the Governor or Shekdare of the prigony, and one pice they retorne back to the merchant".3 Thus in this case the brokerage was a fixed amount and not expressed in terms of percentage.

Notwithstanding the general practice of commission being allowed by both the sides, it appears that the English Company in 1616 decided not to give any brokerage on their part to the brokers. The argument then advanced by the Company was that since three and a half per cent was extorted from foreign merchants as customs at Surat in contrast to the "inhabitants" who paid only two and a half per cent, it had stopped paying the brokers their one per cent in order to recoup the extra payment of one per cent to the customer.4 But this decision of the Company does not appear to have been adhered to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 166-89; EFI, 1665-7, p. 263; EFI, 1668-9, pp. 7-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1618-21, pp. 194-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Ibid. p. 205. This practice is with reference to a place in Bihar. Supplementary Calendar, p. 66. Also cf. EFI, 1618-21, p. 232. For a corroboration of the three and a half per cent customs paid by the European companies see Zaheeruddin Malik, "Mughal Official Documents concerning the English Trade in Bengal, 1633-1712" (Aurangzeb's farman no. XIII), paper presented at the Latin III. presented at the Indian History Congress, Varanasi, 1969. However, an exception was made in the case of the Company's broker, Jadu (Supplementary Galendar, p. 70).

for long. The brokers did not receive their commission from the buyer, if the latter happened to be a prince or noble. 2

The English Company had engaged a few brokers as its regular employees who were paid fixed salaries, mostly on monthly basis (see the Table below):<sup>3</sup>

Name of broker	Amount	40
1. Dhanji	Rs 38/- p.m. plus a "horse and horse-meat"	Year
2. Ananti Das	Rs 20/- p.m.	1636
3. "Bindaban"	Rs 20/- p.m.	1652
4. "Gokul"	Rs 10/- p.m.	"
5. "Chhajja"	Rs 10/- p.m.	"
6. "Madu"	Rs 10/- p.m.	. ",
	전 보이라 생물 이번 경험 경험 경험 시청 시청 전 경험 시청 경험 시청 경험	"

The difference in pay of the individual brokers probably depended upon their respective influence, contacts and reputation.<sup>4</sup> It is not quite clear whether brokers thus employed could claim their brokerage in each case.<sup>5</sup>

We have already shown that some brokers acted as sarrāfs also and they too were employed by the merchants on a regular basis. But they are reported to have drawn their salary as annuity and not month-wise. The English Company gave Tapi Das 500 mahmādis as "annual allowance" (about Rs 222 per annum or Rs 18½ per month) in 1634, while his father drew an annuity of 700 mahmādīs (about Rs 312 or Rs 26 per month) just before his death in 1634.6 Again, Tulsi Das got the same amount as that of Tapi Das in 1651' and 1661.8 Thus it will be seen that the wages of the English Company's brokers and sarrāfs were by and large the same.

Apart from brokerage and salaries, the brokers had other normal channels for swelling their earnings. Many of them had independent trading activities of their own which brought them immense profit. Tapi Das often bought the English Company's goods and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Even in 1619 "Vaggee", a broker at Baroda, is reported to have been paid one per cent by the English factors (EFI, 1618-21, p. 95). In 1623 another was paid one per cent for the sale of three emeralds (EFI, 1622-3, pp. 178-9). Again, in 1636 the Company conceded to pay two per cent to one Kalyanji, a broker (EFI, 1634-6, p. 264).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Supplementary Calendar, pp. 71, 74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For Dhanji see EFI, 1634-6, p. 203; for the rest see EFI, 1651-4, p. 112.

The factors commented that "these brokers [2 to 6 in the Table] are men of mean quality and therefore more amenable and anxious to please; whereas Dhanji had such powerful friends that, when accused of defrauding the Company, no satisfaction could be got from him".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> In 1652 Dhanji was getting brokerage in addition to his salary (*EFI*, 1651-4, p. 112). In 1674 Bhimji Parak was given an *extra* commission of one per cent for the liability of his sub-broker (*EFI*, 1670-7, p. 236).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 58. For the rate of a mahmūdī in relation to the rupee in this period see Irfan Habib, The Agrarian System of Mughal India (Bombay, 1963), p. 384.

<sup>7</sup> EFI, 1651-4, p. 42.

<sup>8</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 89-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> EFI, 1634-6, pp. 24, 55.

in 1642 he is reported to have chartered a vessel (30 tons) of the Company for 5,000 mahmadis for a voyage from Surat to Patna and back. In 1661 two vessels of Beni Das, a broker and sarraf, were noticed at Basra.<sup>2</sup> He also hired out one of his ships to an Englishman for 10,000 mahmūdīs.<sup>3</sup> In the same year Chhota Thakur and Somaji bought a ship, Mayslower, in partnership and "fitted her for a voyage". Abbe Carre speaks of a broker of the French Company, who had "acquired three or four fine vessels, which were always on voyages to the richest kingdoms of the East and brought him immense profits". 5 This broker also freighted his ship to his client to be sent to Bantam on condition of sharing half the profit. Bhimji Parak often sent his goods with the cargo of the English Company's ships. 7

It is not possible to determine the volume of earnings in each transaction, but a few stray references could indicate the profits accruing to some of the brokers. On a lower scale a broker's commission once amounted to Rs 30 (at the rate of one per cent) for the sale of three emeralds for 3,000 rupees. 8 In 1634 Tapi Das earned Rs 250 for giving a hundi of Rs 50,000 to the English Company. 9 On a larger scale we find that the net commission was as much as Rs 3,000 in one transaction alone. 10

The brokers also resorted to underhand methods to add to their income. Indeed there are a large number of references to deceit and dishonest ways and means adopted by them in their dealings, "who", in the words of Walter Payton, "are subtile and deceitfull both to the buyer and seller, if not prevented".11 It was generally held that honesty in a broker is "almost as rare as to see a black swan". 12 Overrating and overcharging were resorted to in the normal course of dealings.13 The foreign merchants were their special quarry. Fryer noted that besides their usual commissions, they secretly squeezed "out of the price of things bought; which cannot be well understood for want of knowledge of their language".14 They often misused the advances made to them by their clients and

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1 EFI, 1642-5, p. 21.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 109.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 144-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 145.

<sup>7</sup> EFI, 1678-84, p. 346.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EFI, 1622-3, pp. 178-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> EFI, 1665-7, p. 263. The investment was of about Rs 30,000 at the rate of 10 per cent commission.

<sup>11</sup> Purchas, iv, 296.

<sup>12</sup> EFI, 1646-50, p. 216. In 1637 the English factors complained of the "theevish generations of broakers, and subbro(ak)ers, peons, mesures, weighers, packers..." (EFI, 1637-41, p. 225). But the hardest denunciation came from Fryer: "To this place (Surat)", he says, "belong two sorts of vermins, the Fleas and Banyas". He adds that the brokers are "expert in all the studied arts of Thriving and Insinuation; so that lying, Dissembling, cheating, are their Master-piece" (op. cit., i, 211, 212). Also see Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 161-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 112; EFI, 1678-84, p. 425.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 211, 212.

were suspected of employing these for other uses or "make profit by interest". It is best to illustrate the malpractices of the brokers by citing the case of Somaji, an English broker, In 1664 he cheated the Company by supplying cloths of inferior quality which did not tally with the "approved samples" or "muster"; there was some discrepancy in the measurements too.2 When the weavers were called upon to explain the bargain, the Company discovered that while Somaji had taken advances to pay the weavers at the rate of 61 mahmadis per piece, he had actually paid them 53 mahmadis instead, thus making a neat sweep of 14 per cent for himself. Besides, he paid the weavers not "in Money, but in leiw thereof in old worme-eaten decayed corne and pice (which is a copper coynee...)", which appear to have been overrated. (The defence of the weavers was that the quality of the cloth supplied wa, in accordance with the rate fixed by Somaji). Moreover, he took 12 per cent as brokerage from the weavers for the whole deal. The Company's calculation was that Somaji had cheated it to an extent not less than 25 or 30 per cent of the advances made to him. Somaji's fraud was not confined to cotton piece-goods; abuses were discovered by the Company in purchase of cotton yarn also. The modus operandi was direct: Somaji's two relatives, who were the Company's brokers, operated as traders in partnership with others; they would buy yarn from the villagers, bring it in "parcells" to the Company's warehouse and Somaji's kinsmen would then purchase the same from their partners on behalf of the Company, thereby making "what prizes pleases them for their owne goods..." Sometimes the brokers conspired with the weavers or other merchants to raise the price of goods, clearly to get an enhanced commission; 4 actually they are reported to have "underhand jougling with the washers, beaters, dyers, nay, to the very packers, indeed in everything". 5 In connection with the lading of goods on freight Abbe Carre warned his countrymen to be on their guard against brokers who often in collusion with the merchants counted "twenty (bales) as ten, and thirty as fifteen", thereby robbing the French Company of half the freight.6 On a major scale we come across instances of direct embezzlement of the clients' goods. 7 One instance indicates that the brokers cheated their clients by maintaining false entries in the "market-books".8

The European companies' greatest dread, however, was the private trade of their factors and countrymen since it directly hit the companies' market. Despite their best efforts, it was not possible to put a stop to it. 9 It was observed that "if twenty Argusses were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p. 98; EFI, 1661-4, p. 112; EFI, 1678-84, p. 425.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Supplementary Calendar, pp. 56, 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 112-3.

<sup>6</sup> Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 162.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Cf. EFI, 1665-7, p. 261. In 1676 the English factors in Bombay discovered that their broker, Girdhar, had been passing off cloth from P. P. Scholar and Schola had been passing off cloth from Broach, Cambay and elsewhere as "cloth of Bombay manufacture" (See EFI, 1670-7, p. 165) (See EFI, 1670-7, p. 165).

In 1631 it was observed that the practice was universal and that its prohibition was taken to be merely a matter of form for the Company a matter of form for the Company's satisfaction (cf. EFI, 1630-3, p. 151).

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there watching, they would not be discovered".1 This was so because the brokers were of great help to the European "mariners" and factors in "private trade".2 The brokers held the most strategic polition, as they were in communication with the artisans and merchants and also had advance information about the departure of ships and "articles of merchandise which will be saleable in the following year...." Equipped with such intelligence, they could easily embarrass their clients and exploit the situation for their own gains.4

Considering all these, the English Company occasionally toyed with the idea of dispensing with the agency of brokers and establishing instead direct contacts with the primary producers like the artisans. But they foiled such efforts by preventing the weavers from bringing their goods directly to the English warehouse; the weavers too did not dare offend them. 5 A close watch on the brokers and a too strict scrutiny of the quality of goods supplied by them often produced violent reaction. At least one broker, Shamdas, was actually charged with having poisoned an English factor.6 Yet another broker, Bhagwandas, was so much of a scare to the English factors that they thought "their lives were in jeopardy". 7 In 1644 Dhanji was accused of "sorcery" to destroy an English factor. 8 For these reasons Fryer had warned that it was safer to let them have their way "than to hazard being poysoned for prying too nearly into their actions".9 In one instance a kinsman of Somaji, the English broker, is reported to have set fire to the cotton goods supplied by him to the Company with a view to destroying the evidence of their inferior quality.10

The best course for the clients to get rid of undesirable brokers was to dismiss them, but this was not easy to do in every case. When Bhagwandas was replaced by his brother Deval Das, the former retaliated by ambushing the English Company's servants. 11 In 1652 the English factors at Agra did not venture to dismiss Avanti Ram since "this would be resented by all the great men here". 12 In another case the dismissed brokers sought the help of Virji Vora, one of the most influential merchants of Surat, who in retaliation prohibited the merchants to deal in English goods. 13 Again , when Deo Das was imprisoned

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1646-50, pp. 228-9. It was wittily remarked that "like Adams children, we thincke few of your servants are free from tasting the forbidden fruit" (Ibid. p. 281).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1637-41, p. 290; EFI, 1646-50, p. 182; Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 161.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Tavernier, op. cit., ii, 34; EFI, 1678-84, p. 425.

Cf. Abbe Carre, op. cit., i, 780-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 287.

<sup>6</sup> EFI, 1678-84, p. 417.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 215.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 217-8.

<sup>10</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 115-6.

<sup>11</sup> EFI, 1678-84, pp. 426, 427.

<sup>12</sup> EFI, 1651-4, p. 112.

<sup>12</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 113.

for his fraudulent dealings by the English Company, Virji Vora immediately came to his rescue.¹ Perhaps the patronage the Company's brokers received from big merchants like Virji Vora was because the former kept them posted with vital commercial information; on the other hand the English Company also utilized brokers of other merchants for obtaining such intelligence.²

Indeed a few brokers had become so influential that they even meddled in the internal administration of the English Company. In the 1650s when Breton, the English President at Surat, was to be replaced by Merry on the Company's order, the brokers were suspected of having conspired with the Mughal authorities at Surat not to allow Breton to leave the town for some time since Breton himself was unwilling to hand over the charge. Again, in 1684 Bhagwandas was instrumental in the dismissal of at least three English factors.

Notwithstanding all these, sometimes the Company's officials were themselves responsible for forcing their brokers to take to devious ways. For example, in 1662 when Somaji was asked to explain the overrating of the goods supplied by him to the English Company, he revealed that Mr Andrews, the Company's official, had forced upon him his own goods at excessive prices, whereupon he had no alternative to make up the loss than by overcharging the Company for the same goods.<sup>5</sup>

However, the relations between the brokers and the Company were not always bad. Once in 1621 when the English Company found that the earnings of Mahi Das at Surat had been reduced owing to sending of goods to other places for sale, the former resolved to help him by giving him one thousand mahmūdīs and other gifts in compensation. Jadu was given Rs 23 and a "shash" on the Holi festival by his client. Bhimji Parak was held in much esteem by the English Company, which presented him in 1683 with a medal and chain of gold to the value of £150 in recognition of his services.

As regards the relation between brokers and state officials, we have shown how the brokers were punished by the latter for violation of a temporary ban on the English trade at Broach. In 1620 the "Nabobe" fixed the rate of brokerage at Patna for silk and cloths. The English factors at Cambay wrote in 1622 to the Surat Presidency that the "governor" of Cambay had come down with a heavy hand on the brokers and ordered for the "unaccostomed extorsion" of "one of their twoe in the hundred brockeridge for what goods (bought?) by them". To this end he had also commanded that all brokers should render a daily account of what they bought and all merchants of what they sold; also each transaction was to take place only in the bazar. This order caused a great stir among merchants, weavers and brokers and they stopped their business for some time. § In 1628

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1630-3, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> EFI, 1646-50, pp. 239, 276.

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1678-84, p. 426.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1661-4, pp. 212-3.

<sup>6</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p. 232.

<sup>7</sup> EFI, 1678-84, pp. 327, 345; EFI, 1668-9, p. 85 fn.

<sup>8</sup> EFI, 1622-3, pp. 169-70.

"Pangue", the English broker, was imprisoned by the son-in-law of Yaqub Khan, governor of Surat, for failing to bring cloths for him. In 1636 the "governor" of Baroda had the brokers of weavers imprisoned and beaten up for their refusal to sell him cloths at very low prices; thereupon the weavers left Baroda for Ahmedabad in protest. However, they had hardly gone a few miles when the governor's messengers met them "to entreat" for their return with a promise of giving them no more cause for "discontent" in future.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the governor and customs officer of Surat were suspected in 1648 by the English Company of having abetted and supported the brokers to assist in the "private trade" of the Englishmen "in respect of the benefitt they reape thereby". We are told that since the governor of Surat (1672) was paid a "yearly stipend" by the (Surat) brokers, it was not possible to get the former's help in stopping the "private trade". This "yearly stipend", the factors add, was in lieu of his (Surat governor's) "protection of brokers", probably against harassment and illegal exactions and pressure of the bureaucracy. But this could be contrasted with what Fryer observed: "There is another thing above all the rest an unpardonable offence; for a Banyan or Rich Broker to grow wealthy without Protection of Some Great Person", and adds that such a "Mischief... is always cured by Transfusion of Treasure out of the Banyans into the Governors Coffers..."

It appears that the state occasionally controlled the brokers by limiting their operations to particular areas and if they intended to go from one place to another for business transactions, they were required to obtain a licence from the local authority. Probably this rule was relaxed for those who acted as regular employees of their clients. At the time of shipping, Fryer informs us, brokers of the "poorer sort" would request the governor of Surat "to license them to keep a Mart" at the Swally Road. We do not know whether the brokers had to pay a fee for obtaining such licences; most probably the state authorities would have demanded bribes from them.

### V

Our study of the diverse aspects of brokers' role helps us in getting a few glimpses of the commercial organization at the grass roots. They acted as middlemen between the primary producers and merchants/companies including the company servants. They "bargained, measured, kept accompts, and delivered unto the washers and performed all

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<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1624-9, pp. 190-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 290. In 1636 a Dutch broker was imprisoned by the governor of Surat to force the Company to pay him 500 rupees (see EFI, 1634-6, pp. 183-4).

³ EFI, 1646-50, p. 182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 245-6.

In 1616 Somaji, the English broker, left Surat for Broach "without licence", whereupon the Surat customer called his family members before him for enquiry. However, no action was taken against him when the customer was told that Somaji had gone in service of the Company (Supplementary Calendar, pp. 77, 79).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 212.

other offices" on behalf of their regular employers. They served as linguists and thus surmounted the language barrier to a great extent. They expanded the money-market and improved credit facilities by raising money for their clients. Their organization on family lines, spread over different regions and even outside India, further facilitated business dealings. It is no accident, therefore, that despite the occasional intentions of the English Company to dispense with them, it was not possible to establish direct contacts with the weavers, artisans or merchants. Indeed the whole commercial world in India during the 17th century was set in motion by brokers.

It is important to note that the basic need for brokers, among others, arose from three facts: (a) there was an incredible territorial diversification of centres of production, located far and wide; (b) the individual output of these production centres for the same commodity was very low; and (c) some centres specialized in particular commodities only. Taking the textile industry as an example, there was not a single manufacturing territorial unit capable of meeting the demand alone, say, of even one of the foreign companies. The situation was further complicated by the large number of competing buyers on the same market for the same goods. Thus the existing production process created a demand for the services of a large number of brokers to contact the producers scattered at numerous centres of production and arrange for the required volume of goods for their clients.

As a result the number of brokers increased concomitantly with the expansion of trade and commerce during the 17th century. We meet remarks like "hundreds of busy brokers" or "swarmes of Banian brokers" with reference to Surat.2 Manrique reports about Patna (1640) that "the trade was so great that as they informed me, it contained over six hundred brokers and middlemen engaged in commerce...."3 And as Fryer remarked: "Their whole desire is to have Money pass through their Fingers, to which a great part is sure to stick".4 Manrique adds in relation to Patna that brokers "derived such great profits from their labours that most of them were wealthy men".5 In 1630 the English factors observed: "...who of nothinge, beinge poore and beggerly fellowes, have in short time raysed themselves to greate wealth and riches".6 The brokers at Surat, says Ovington in the 1690s, "are reckoned by some to be worth 15, by others 30 Lacks of Roupies". 7

## VI

Of late a debate about the potentialities of capitalistic development in India has started; this has not only yielded some fruitful observations, but also uncovered areas of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 264.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> C.f. EFI, 1637-41, p. 290; EFI, 1646-50, p. 182.

<sup>3</sup> Manrique, Travels (Hakluyt Society) ii, 140.

<sup>4</sup> Fryer, op. cit., i, 212.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Manrique, op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Ovington, op. cit., p. 188. However, a few of them are reported to have become penniless or at least reduced to misery. The reason was their clients reduced to misery. The reason was that some of them indiscriminately made advances to their elients

controversy. The debate partly revolves around the nature of the putting-out system and its implications for the transition from merchant capital to industrial capital, that is, the progressive control of labour by capital. In this connection the contributions made by A.I. Chicherov and Irfan Habib are of considerable significance, especially since they hold seemingly opposite views. Our survey here, however, will be confined mainly to those sectors of craft-production, especially textile, wherein the brokers played a basic role. We shall attempt to examine the role of the brokers in bringing the labour and production process under the control of merchant capital.

The penetration of merchant capital into the existing artisan-level mode of production could occur through the putting-out system  $(d\bar{a}dn\bar{\imath})$  which seems to have been quite an established practice, though on a small scale, even prior to the 17th century.<sup>2</sup> The brokers come into the picture because the advances to the primary producers by the merchants were made through them.<sup>3</sup>

Let us first set out the economic structure of the putting-out system. The Indian economy during the 17th century was a sellers' (i.e., producers') market. We have already referred to the tremendous demand and the large number of competitive buyers flooding the market. Thus from the merchant's point of view, especially of those engaged in foreign trade, the putting-out system excluded his rivals and secured him timely delivery of a stipulated quantity of commodity in accordance with his specifications at previously agreed rates. On the other hand the primary producer accepted advances since he had to cope with extensive orders for which he may not have adequate money to buy raw materials. (The next stage was the supply of raw materials too). Thus the putting-out system rendered economic services to both the merchant and the artisan.

In this context the degree of penetration of merchant capital into the production process through the putting-out system could be assessed by examining whether the merchant advanced cash or raw materials (or both) and the tools of production to the artisan. Taking the textile industry, we have adequate evidence for advance being given in cash to infer that it was an established practice. But evidence for raw material is quite insufficient to show its wide use, while that for instruments of production is almost negligible.

Here it must be pointed out that the need for giving raw material (yarn) to the weavers arose from the consideration that the yarn obtained by weavers themselves was often of inferior quality, even when granted cash advance.<sup>4</sup> It appears that some profit accrued to

and others, which remained unrecovered. For individual details about Jadu, Tulsi Das Parak, Chhota Thakur and Somaji, cf. EFI, 1630-3, pp. 187, 275; EFI, 1665-7, pp. 7, 171; EFI, 1668-9, pp. 33, 189, 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A.I. Chicherov, *India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries* (Moscow, 1971) (see especially chapter IV); Irfan Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalistic Development in the Economy of Mughal India", *ENQUIRY*, Winter, 1971, pp. 1-56 (Paper read at the International Economic History Congress, Bloomington, 1968).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Chicherov, op. cit., p. 169.

See section III of the present paper.

Cf. Chicherov, op. cit., p. 180; Irfan Habib, Enquiry, pp. 43-4.

the weaver when he himself purchased yarn or raw silk of a quality questionable from the merchant's point of view. Thus it may be reasonably assumed that the weavers did not always welcome the supply of raw material from the merchant as this possibly wiped off the little "cut" they could otherwise get. This partly explains the scarcity of data on this particular practice, that is, the advance being made in raw material.

That the predominant form of the putting-out system was cash-advance is evident from what Streynsham Master says about Bengal in the later decades of the 17th century:1

The most proper season for giving out moneys for cossaes, Mulmulls etc., made in and about Dacca is the month of January.

Dellolls or Broackers,...take four monethes time for its delivery, and within six monethes or thereabouts doe usually bring in the same browne (unbleached) as it comes from the weavers.

The said Broackers, having tooke money, deliver it to the Picars (Pāikār) who carry it from Towne to towne, and deliver it to weavers...

Here Master does not mention at all the practice of giving yarn to the weavers. The accounts of Hedges also point to the same conclusion.2 We find only one reference in the English factory records to this practice, but that is in connection with raw silk. The reason assigned was that the weavers, out of poverty, could not buy raw silk of the requisite quality.3

The same could be said about Gujarat with the difference that probably this practice was adopted on a comparatively larger scale than in Bengal. But there is no evidence to convince us that it ever acquired a very dominant form of the putting-out system there. Even Chicherov, despite his strong advocacy of the development of capitalistic relations, is struck by the scarcity of data on the advancing of raw material, that is, yarn, to the weavers. He himself explains that "the supply of raw materials never posed a problem" in the rural areas because "cotton-growing, which was extraordinarily extensive and in some areas almost universal, was a typical economic-geographical feature of India; cotton could be grown on every farm or bought on the nearest market". He adds, "spinning, widespread not only in the weavers' homes but also in ordinary peasant families, created a constant and vast source of raw materials for the weaving trade". 4 Thus it may safely be concluded that the most distinguishing feature of the putting-out system during the 17th century was the practice of cash-advance.

From this point we can pass on to the part played by the practice of cash-advance in transforming the relations of production. Considering the prime motive of giving cashadvances to the artisan, we do not notice any distinct tendency on the part of the merchants

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> S. Master, op cit., p. 14.

William Hedges, The Diary of William Hedges, Esq., during his Agency in Bengal (Hakluyt Society), no. 74 (London, 1887), i, 71, 82-3, 106, 121. He never speaks of advance being made in the form of raw material form of raw material.

<sup>\*</sup> EFI, 1655-60, p. 296 (cited by Irfan Habib, Enquiry, pp. 43-4).

<sup>4</sup> Chicherov, op. cit., p. 181. Cf. Irfan Habib, Enquiry, p. 43, where he is cautious with reference to Guiarat. Gujarat.

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to intervene deliberately in the production process in such a manner as to bring about a radical change in the relations of production. True, the producer was "tied" to the merchant in the sense that now he was under an obligation to fulfil his commitment, that is, to provide the merchant with the commodity produced by him in accordance with the merchant's specifications within a limited time and at an agreed price. But the artisan still retained the ownership of the tools of production and in this case raw materials too. What really happened was that he had merely sold off his produce in return for advance payment out of his free will. There does not appear to exist any extraordinary economic compulsion (except poverty) for him to accept such orders from the merchant; nor does the latter appear to have employed non-economic coercion to compel him to enter into such a deal. Instead the merchant had to induce the producer to accept the advance payment in his own interest. For example, in 1665 the English factors wrote from Surat:

Calicoes are soe bought up by the Dutch etc. that we are forced to pray and pay for what we have and take it as a *courtesy* [italics ours] that the weavers will vouchsafe to receive our money 8 and 10 months beforehand, which is the only thing that tyes them to us.<sup>2</sup>

Here the merchants felt obliged to the weavers for their acceptance of the advance money. But even this "tie-up" was very slender. In 1647 the English factors at Thatta wrote to Surat:

Besides, those weavers are a company of base rougues, for, notwithstanding wee give them money aforehand part of the yeare, and that in the time of there greatest want, yet, if any pedling cloth merchant comes to buy, they leave us and worke for him, though hee gives noe money aforehand; being the ordinary base make is more facill and easy to weave then ours, with which they must take some paines.<sup>3</sup>

Again, in 1622 they wrote from Broach: "Wee must give outt our money beforehand, and receave the proceedes of itt att the weavers and brokers pleasure".4

Thus it is indeed incongruous when Chicherov talks of "economic bondage",<sup>5</sup> "economic dependence",<sup>6</sup> "physical coercion",<sup>7</sup> and "merchant monopoly",<sup>8</sup> with regard to the relations between the merchant and the producer during the 17th century. The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> We have in mind the type of coercion that prevailed in Bengal after Plassey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1665-7, p. 27. That the weavers were much sought after by the merchants to accept the advance is evidenced by what the English factors wrote in 1663 from Surat:"... there were very few that would undertake it (cloth of long dimensions), they being full of other employments in weaving sundry sorts of goods for the marketts of Mocha, Persia, Bussorah, Atchin, etc., that if wee do not engage them by impresting monys beforehand, wee should not get halfe the callicoes wee send you". (EFI, 1661-4, pp. 208-9).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EFI, 1646-50, p. 159. This frequently happened; compare Master, op. cit., p. 318; "...if any Merchant or weavers that had received the Companys Dadanee deliver his goods to any other, he shall not be further imployed".

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1622-3, p. 116.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Chicherov, op. cit., pp. 175, 176.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. pp. 167, 173.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 167

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 166.

artisan had merely turned into a "contract-producer" from an "independent" one. True, he was no longer the owner of his produce, but he was not yet alienated from the ownership of raw material and tools of production. Curiously Chicherov thinks that this ownership was an "illusion". However, in the light of the facts cited above any talk of producer's "economic dependence" and "bondage" during the 17th century appears to us to be a bigger "illusion".

As long as the artisan worked within the domestic system of craft-production, real capitalistic relations of production could not be generated. That the putting-out system did not deprive the producer of his tools and often raw material clearly indicates that the control of labour by merchant capital was indeed very weak. Until this alienation took place, commodity-production manufactory or, in other words, assemblage of a large number of workers at one place and the same time for the production of the same commodity under a superior capitalist direction could not emerge.<sup>2</sup> But at this stage the putting-out system itself, along with the brokers, would ultimately disappear, yielding place to new relations of production.

Nor do we find any evidence for the creation of surplus value, say, through "depression of wages", during the 17th century so that a part of the labour time could remain unpaid for. Quite obviously in the absence of the exercise of non-economic coercion by the merchants, this was not possible so long as the tools of production were retained by the artisan, working within the domestic system. Since the tools were simple and cheap to be made or purchased and no technological breakthrough was achieved rendering them costlier, beyond the means of an average artisan, the latter was not alienated from them. Here we may recall the observation of Marx:

The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 172, 175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. Marx Gapital (Moscow, 1954), i, 322, 714. For kārkhānas maintained by the Mughal emperor, nobles and occasionally by foreign companies and local merchants see Irfan Habib, Enquiry, pp. 44-6. For additional evidence see Bernier, Travels, ed, Constable, p. 44: "The Dutch have sometimes seven or eight hundred natives employed in their silk-factory at Kassem-bazar, where in like manner, the English and other merchants employ a proportionate number". However, it is important to point out that such pieces of evidence refer to only one sector of textile craft production, that is, silk fabrics, a costly commodity, and that too limited to Kasimbazar and in another case Patna (cf. EFI, 1618-21, pp. 197-8). Even here the brokers, through the putting-out system, were operative in getting raw silk for the merchants. Besides, it is highly doubtful whether tools were also provided by the latter. At any rate such examples were sporadic.

rate such examples were sporadic. Also see *EFI*, 1646-50, pp. 59, 64-5, for the erection of "dyeing workhouses" at Surat by the English factors. It is interesting to note that the experiment of refining saltpetre bought raw at Malpore with a view to rendering it "better and much better cheap" in their "owne howse" at Surat and Raibagh by the English factors ended in failure because of excessive cost, "much dearer than the saltpetre bought at Agra and Ahmadabad". They resumed their former practice of buying it refined at Malpore (cf. *EFI*, 1642-5, pp. 164, 186).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Compare Chicherov, op. cit., p. 180, for a half-hearted reference to the 18th century. Also see p. 166. Capital, i, 714.

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However, we do not propose to hold that merchant capital did not exercise any influence on the organization of production. The putting-out system through which it operated did encroach on the "independent" status of the primary producer, transforming him into a "contract-worker". It also cut him off from the market—a process which was inherent in the system itself. Again, the sporadic examples of kārkhānas maintained and the dyeing and refining "houses" erected by the foreign merchants in Gujarat and Bengal do indicate the direction of change during the latter half of the 17th century. Yet these changes were not fundamental nor so widespread as to compel us to discover in them elements which could promote real capitalistic relations. After all these were changes within the existing mode of production, wherein merchant capital had a very feeble hold over the production process. Therefore, it will be incorrect to say that merchant capital "broke through the traditional bonds of production" in 17th century India: it had only nibbled a small part of it, of not much consequence.

It is pertinent to ask why did merchant capital, operating through the putting-out system, fail to exercise any worthwhile control over labour? That the failure did not spring from a lack of its development has been examined by Irfan Habib.<sup>5</sup> We have already suggested that the enlargement of demand and the flooding of the market with a large number of competitive buyers had put the primary producer in a favourable situation; the absence of any extraordinary economic compulsion or non-economic coercion? left the artisan free to strike a deal with whomsoever he considered best. Another important reason was the coexistence of the independent artisan-level production with the putting-out system (which turned the artisan into a contract labourer) probably on a scale larger than

One may ask: was this situation much different from that when usurer's capital was operative? Did not the artisan and peasant sell off his "future" produce to the village money-lender?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Compare Marx: "Co-operation is a necessary concomitant of all production on a large scale, but it does not, in itself, represent a fixed form characteristic of a particular epoch in the development of the capitalist mode of production..." (Capital, op. cit., p. 335).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Chicherov, op. cit., p. 173, where he concedes it himself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Cf. Irfan Habib, Enquiry, pp. 46-52.

This is further confirmed by the practice of the foreign companies to induce the artisans to migrate to places where the former needed them most. Cf. EFI, 1661-4, p. 64, for the Portuguese being successful in inducing the Bengal weavers to come to Chaul. The English Company's efforts to entice the weavers to come to Bombay after 1669 is quite significant (cf. EFI, 1668-9, pp. 65, 69, 73, 223-4, 246; also EFI, 1670-7, pp. 36-7; EFI, 1678-84, p. 219).

There is nothing to show that the local or foreign merchants could ever exercise such powers. On the contrary we find them helpless when the artisans not only did not fulfil their commitments, but even got away with the advance money. For example, when Shivaji invaded Dharangaon in 1675, the weavers fled away with 5,681 rupees advanced to them and nothing could be done about it (cf. EFI, 1670-7, p. 254). The English factors wrote in 1661 from Kasimbazar: "...our advancing monies beforehand to such a needy generation as weavers are, espetially where wee have noe power..."

EFI, 1661-4, p. 62). For unrecouped advances, called "bad debts", see Hedges, op. cit., i, 82-3.

In 1682 the English factors at Surat explained that narrow baftas of the kind wanted could not be supplied as the weavers found it more lucrative to make other sorts and could "pick and choose" owing to the great demand for cloth (cf. EFI, 1678-84, p. 305; also see p. 232). In 1622 at Pulicat many weavers and painters "voluntarily (ilalics ours) offered to follow the English wherever they choose to go..." (EFI, 1622-3, p. 105). No "bondage", please!

the latter or at least on equal footing. Besides, territorial and occupational mobility of the artisan was yet another factor<sup>2</sup> which often may have rescued him from falling into "economic bondage" or "dependence" as a result of his poverty, on which Chicherov lays so much stress. Finally, as we have shown above, the interests of the broker and merchant did not always coincide. The former tried to seize upon an opportunity to get some irregular income through underhand mechanism: his victims were both the producer and the merchant. Thus he did not always act in a manner which could promote the interest of merchant capital; rather he worked sometimes in collusion with the artisan.

All this actually strengthens the opinion of Marx:

The independent and predominant development of capital as merchant's capital is tantamount to the non-subjection of production to capital, and hence to capital developing on the basis of an alien social mode of production which is also independent of it. The independent development of merchant's capital, therefore, stands in inverse proportion to the general economic development of society.4

To sum up, the brokers tended to preserve a commercial structure that enriched them greatly and once they had indispensably entrenched themselves into that framework, it is futile to expect from them that they will be keen to change the gainful set-up in terms of mode of production: that will be tantamount to self-destruction. Perhaps it would not have been difficult for "broker-contractors" (middlemen merchants) like Ji Ram Shah, Piru Suddarung, Piru Hingola and others<sup>5</sup> to evolve into manufacturing entrepreneurs; for, it could be said, the examples of karkhanas maintained by the Mughal emperors, nobles and occasionally by the foreign companies should have served as models. But a mere change in the organization of production unaccompanied by changes in technology could not have bettered the total supply situation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For example, see *EFI*, 1618-21, p. 192, and also Tavernier, op. cit., i, 97. Such pieces of evidence could be multiplied.

This statement is based on a number of passages in our sources. For territorial mobility compare EFI, 1634-6, p. 64; *EFI*, 1642-5, p. 37; *EFI*, 1646-50, p. 154; *EFI*, 1655-60, p. 210; *EFI*, 1668-9, p. 145; *Tayernier on cit* 74. The Tavernier, op. cit., i, 74. The reasons for migration or desertion were numerous: lack of investment or money, "losses", "want of work", famine, etc. For occupational mobility see Irfan Habib, Enquiry, pp. 39-40. pp. 39-40.

<sup>3</sup> See section III of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> Marx, Capital, tr. (Moscow, 1971), iii, 327-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Cf. EFI, 1622-3, pp. 163, 183; EFI, 1661-4, pp. 188-9; EFI, 1665-7, p. 263; EFI, 1668-9, pp. 7-8.

## SOME ASPECTS OF SURAT AS A TRADING CENTRE IN THE 17TH CENTURY

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Surat gained a position of commercial eminence as a result of its contact with the European East India companies, particularly the English and the Dutch companies, in the 17th century. The activities of these companies as also of the Indian and Asian merchants in Surat since the beginning of the century led to the growth of a well-developed indigenous business system. The period was marked by the European mercantile impact on the economy of Surat, which generated a process of capital accumulation reflected in the rise of the Indian merchant princes like Virji Vora, Haji Zahid Beg, Hari Vaishya and Haji Abdul Nabi, besides a large number of traders, brokers and agents. The objective of this paper is to analyse in the context of the political framework the contemporary business system and study its dynamics through the activities of the individuals and communities involved in it. The paper attempts to re-evaluate the role of the Surat merchants and questions the traditional interpretation that Surat declined as a commercial centre and gave way in importance to Bombay. It is contended that the business system generated enough fluidity all through the 17th century to sustain the stress and strain of the latter half of the century.

The English and the Dutch who established their factories in the second decade of the 17th century were well aware of the city's geographical importance. Situated on the bank of the Tapti, a navigable river, it contained one of the largest ports in India (Swally) which was frequented by ships from most parts of the world. Niccolao Manucci, an Italian traveller who visited Surat in the mid-17th century, was delighted to take a seat on the bank of the river and view the numerous boats "which shoot to and fro like arrows". The port stood midway between the productive centres of the Far East, Malay, the spice islands and, further beyond, China and Japan on one side and the ports of the Persian and Arabian gulfs on the other. It was also used for the pilgrim traffic to Mecca. Surat's comparative proximity to the cotton areas and manufacturing centres of Gujarat and the Deccan region in the south invested it with a special significance. It exported and re-exported a

W.H. Moreland, From Akbar to Aurangzeb: A Study in Indian Economic History (London, 1923), pp. 152-3; Dwijendra Tripathi, "Indian Entrepreneurship in Historical Perspective: A Reinterpretation", Economic and Political Weekly, vi (29 May 1971), 59-62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B.G. Gokhale, "English Trade with Western India 1650-1700", JIH, xlii (1964), 330-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For details see G.W. Forrest, Cities of India: Past and Present (London, 1903), p. 53; Gokhale, op. cit., pp. 331, 341.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> William Irvine (ed), Storia Do Mogor or Mogul India 1653-1708 by Niccolao Manucci, i (London, 1907) 61.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> H.G. Rawlingson, "Life in an English Factory in India in the Seventeenth Century", Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings of Meetings, iii (January 1921), 25.

large variety of goods such as calicoes, silks, cotton yarn and imported bullion, coral, broad cloth, ivory, vermilion, quick silver and metals such as copper, iron and lead. Through Surat India absorbed large quantities of gold, silver and coinage and exported goods on a scale sufficient to maintain a highly favourable balance of trade. The most striking feature of the city, however, was its own mercantile community which was large and professionally skilled.

The Indian business communities in Surat consisted of the Hindus, the Muslims and the Parsis. The Parsis were mainly involved in agriculture, weaving and crafts such as embroidery, ivory work, cabinet-making and carpentry. John Fryer who was in Surat in the 1670s writes that the Parsis were "rather husbandmen than traders... they supply the marine with carts drawn by oxen, the ships with wood and water". They were, however, in the forefront of the shipbuilding industry in Surat. Cursetji and Khurshed were the two most renowned shipbuilders during the latter part of the 17th century. A few Parsis also engaged in trade and money-lending. Bomanji Pujiyaji, Nanabhai, Dhanji Vora and Rustamji Manekji were among some prominent Parsi merchants of Surat in the 17th century.

J. Albert de Mandelslo, a German traveller who visited Surat in 1638, wrote that the Muslims had an aversion to trade and commerce and they preferred government positions. It is true that most of the key administrative positions (in the Surat customs house, for instance) were held by the Muslims and they seldom operated as professional bankers or money-lenders. Yet the contemporary records clearly show the existence of a large number of highly efficient and resourceful Muslim merchants in Surat. They dominated the shipping business in which very few Hindu merchants figure during this period. The English factory records mention the names of Haji Zahid Beg, his son Mirza Masum and his grandson Mahmud Araff as ship-owners and merchants. Mirza Mahmud, the owner of Toufiqni and Mahmudi, was an immensely rich merchant having influential contacts among the ruling

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B.G. Gokhale, "Some Aspects of Early English Trade with Western India 1600-1650", JIH, xl (1962), 24; William Foster (ed), The English Factories in India 1618-21 (Oxford, 1906-36; henceforth cited as EFI), pp. 46, 201; Bal Krishna, Commercial Relations between India and England 1601-1757 (London, 1924), p. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H.G. Rawlingson (ed), A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689 by J. Ovington (Oxford, 1929), p. 130.

William Crooke (ed), A New Account of East India and Persia Being Nine Years' Travels 1672-1681 by John Fryer, i (London, 1909), 295.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Charles Fawcett (ed), EFI, 1670-7, i (new series), 233; Ardeshir Wadia, Bombay Dockyard and the Wadia Master Builders (Bombay, 1957), p. 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Edalji Barjorji Patel, Suratni Tavarikh [in Gujarati] (Surat, 1890), p. 56; EFI, 1670-7, p. 355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> John Davies, The Voyages and Travels of the Ambassadors (London, 1662), p. 24.

Apart from religious considerations, one possible explanation of this phenomenon was the lack of interest among the Muslims in accounts. The European travellers who speak eloquently about the arithmetical skills of the Hindu traders and shroffs seldom, if at all, refer to the Muslims in this connection. John Fryer alludes to this point when he states that the management of financial transactions was solely in the hands of the Hindus, Crooke, op. cit., p. 282.

The English and the Dutch factory records make only few references to Hindu ship-owners. One Banaji Revadas "owned" vessels, but he sold or leased them after buying and renovation. Tapidas Gangaji of Cambay owned two ships. See EFI, 1665-7, pp. 88, 202; EFI, 1622-3, p. 161.

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and business circles. Mirza Muazzam, Abdul Kadir, Haji Kadir, Agha Jafar, Haji Abdul Nabi and Mir Nizami were among other ship-owners and merchants in the 17th century. Sheikh Ahmid Sheikh Abdulla owned nine ships, while Abdul Ghafur owned not less than 20 ships. Alexander Hamilton, an English interloper who knew Abdul Ghafur, writes:

Abdul Ghafur, a Mahometan that I was acquainted with, drove a trade equal to the English East India Company, for I have known him fit out in a year about twenty sail of ships between 300 and 800 tons, and none of them had less of his own stock than 10,000 pounds and some of them had 25,000 and after that foreign stock was sent away. he behould to have as much more of an inland for the following year's market.1 Masih-uz-Zaman, the governor of Surat in the 1630s, owned a ship, Salamati, a significant name in view of the increasing piratical activities on the high seas.2 Among the Muslims the members of the Vohra community played an important role in Surat's commercial life and some of the ship-owners and merchants like Abdul Ghafur, Kasim Bhai, Haji Kadir and Haji Kasim hailed from that community. The Ismaili Vohra community in Gujarat in particular emerged exclusively as a trading community during the Sultanate period (1192-1526) and thereafter.

The Hindus far outnumbered the Muslims as merchants, traders, shroffs or currency dealers, bankers and accountants in Surat. It was customary for a European traveller to use the term "banian" for the Hindu merchants and traders. The term was used as an occupational category and did not explain the caste affiliation of the bania. Though it is true that most of the traders and bankers belonged to the vaishya castes (known as vanias in Gujarat), in the 17th century quite a few banias of Surat belonged to the non-vaishya castes. For instance, Somji Chitta and Chhotadas Thakur who served the English as brokers for nearly three decades were Rajputs.3 One Dayaram, a Nagar brahmin of Surat, was a broker and merchant.4 Presumably the English found it more convenient at this time to appoint their brokers such persons as knew English or Persian or both and it is likely that the Nagar brahmins were found useful for this reason both by the Dutch and the English. The English factory records refer to brokers who knew several languages. Travadi Shrikrishna Arjumji Nathji, a Nagar brahmin, financed the English Company's trade to the tune of several lakhs of rupees in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.6 These illustrations serve to disprove the myth of traders and bankers being exclusively banias and this phenomenon should rather be explained in terms of the prevailing economic opportunities which tended to broaden the base of customary occupational patterns.

The European companies and Indian merchants employed agents or brokers to procure goods at a cheap rate and at the right time. The collection of piece-goods for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> William Foster (ed), A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton, i (London, 1930), 88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1634-6, 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The English factory records make frequent mention of Rajput traders and brokers.

Narmadashankar Dave, Suratni Mukhtesar Hakikat [in Gujarati] (Bombay, 1866), p. 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. 163; EFI, 1678-84, p. xxx.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Dave, op. cit., pp. 37-9; B.A. Saletore, "Forgotton Gujarati Brahman/Banker of 18th Century" Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings of Meetings, xxx (1956), 155-60.

export required an elaborate organization. To ensure a steady supply of these goods money had to be advanced to the weavers. This was one of the functions of the brokers. The brokers went into the districts, employing clerks or gumastas on a monthly salary, to see that the weavers abided by their agreements. Sometimes between the agents and the weavers there was another class of small brokers called dalals.<sup>1</sup> The brokers got a commission of three per cent on all sales and purchases.2 Most brokers also traded on their own account and some of them grew very rich. The Parekh family—Tulsidas and his sons, Bhimil and Kalyan—enriched itself considerably while in the service of the English Company. The Company considered the Parekhs almost indispensable and in November 1684 it presented a chain and a gold medal to Bhimji Parekh "with some decent ceremony which hath much obliged him and encouraged him".3 Not all brokers, however, enjoyed the Company's confidence and sometimes the Company found itself cheated by the dishonest ones. Thus in 1662 two brokers taking advances from the Company gave to the weavers at a considerable discount and cheated the Company by 25 to 30 per cent. They charged the weavers for interest and exacted 12 per cent brokerage from them. The weavers actually received very little cash. What they got was "old worme-eaten decayed come and some money". The factors wrote to the Company, "We know not as yet where it will end".4 Surat had a large number of brokers who helped Indian as well as foreign merchants in their business transactions.

The possession of capital distinguished a merchant from a shroff. The shroffs who came exclusively from the vaishya castes handled exchange business, a highly specialized profession. The Surat shroffs sometimes raised or lowered the prices of the specie in an arbitrary fashion and the Europeans found themselves at their mercy.5

One of the most effective ways in which the Surat banias put a check on the European companies was through money-lending. In view of the fact that these companies made large investments to buy goods in India and had little to offer in terms of goods, they were compelled to borrow large sums. Persons like Virji Vora (Jain by religion), Hari Vaishya, Tapi Das, Beni Das, Haridas Vanmalidas and the Parekhs loaned money ranging from a few thousand rupees to several lakhs. They took full advantage of the Company's need and charged interest which varied according to the changes in the supply and demand factors. As President Blackman and council reported to the Company:

Have done their best to reduce the rate of interest paid by the Company, and, as no satisfactory arrangement could be made with Tapi Das, they approached Beni Das, who has agreed to furnish them with money up to Rs 200,000/- at 5/8 per cent per month.6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Surat and Broach, ii (Bombay, 1877), 103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Phillip Anderson, The English in Western India: Being the History of the Factory at Surat, of Bombay and the Subordinate Factories on the Western Coast (London, 1856), p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> EFI, 1678-84, iii (new series), 346.

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1661-4,pp. 111-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. 296.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 300.

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The interest rate of Virji Vora varied between seven and a half per cent and 12 per cent per annum. Even though the English had realized that Virji Vora was "the most injurious man to your trade", and a "costly creditor... who supplied our wants in Surat with moneys for his own ends" they still approached him, for they found in him the only person who financed their business in their hour of need. The money-lenders put the European companies into trouble and embarrassment by insisting on their loans being repaid in time and sometimes even earlier. On one occasion the president and council in Surat noted that the English found it difficult "to show their faces to their creditors or appear in publique out of doors".2 The money-lenders not infrequently obliged the Company to carry their goods on its vessels. In 1628 Virji Vora and Hari Vaishya threatened the Company factors that if the latter failed to ship their goods they would insist on the immediate payment of their past debts. 3 The Company had to submit to this demand. In 1645 Vora again forced the Company to ship his goods in an English vessel. The English thereupon concluded that so long as they remained indebted to the money-lenders and particularly to Virji Vora, their trade would continue to suffer.4 The Dutch also had the same experience.5

The system which operated as an instrument of exchange purely on the basis of trust was highly developed in Surat, as in most urban centres of Gujarat. The Surat merchants had their agents spread in many parts of the country and abroad. A merchant intending to go to a distant place to buy his merchandise would not take the risk of keeping cash with him. Instead he would ask the local shroff for a hundi to be cashed at his destination either at the branch of the shroff or the merchant concerned or at any other firm having business relations with the shroff. There are numerous instances of the Surat merchants forwarding letters of credit at their Indian branches to serve their Indian and European customers. Hundi, a typical Gujarati method of financial transactions, was extremely useful in view of the insecurity on inland routes.

The position which Surat held as a place of maritime commerce resulted in the growth of shipping insurance business. It seems likely that in view of the growing uncertainty of the sea traffic insurance rates underwent great fluctuations. Thus in 1643, following the rumour that a Surat ship was captured on the seas, the rate of freight insurance shot up from three per cent to 30 per cent.6 Insuring goods for inland trade was a fairly common practice in India.

The foreign travellers who visited Surat were surprised and even amused to observe the banias undertaking business transactions not by words but by means of fingers, all sales taking place in complete silence without anyone speaking. The system of silent bargaining was noticed by several writers such as Jean de Thevenot, John Fryer and Jean Baptiste

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1642-5, pp. 5, 108; EFI, 1655-60, p. 369.

<sup>\*</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. 229.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 108.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. 306.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 92.

Tavernier. Fryer was astonished to see the Surat banias instructing each other with fingers covered under a piece of cloth and fixing prices of goods in a way which effectively concealed them from others. The secret was all under the cloak, the prices being determined by signs that were understood by the mere pressure of fingers. Fryer remarked: "Such a subtle generation is this, and so fitly squared a place is Surat to exercise their genius in".1

The "noisy" banias tried to entice their prospective buyers to buy their wares ranging from silk and cotton cloth and embroidered goods to the varieties such as buttons, snuff boxes, bowls, spoons, and sword-handles made from the well-known Cambay agate stones and cornelian.<sup>2</sup> Some dealers or consumers roaming through the market places observed the traders, shopkeepers and brokers operating in an un-Weberian vein. As J. Ovington remarked, the Surat banias were addicted to their temporal interest and amassing of treasure and strained to secure a pice, though some of them were worth lakhs of rupees. They, like any non-Hindu merchant, were bent upon increasing their wealth and plodding for material gains.<sup>3</sup> The business behaviour of the banias deviated from their scriptural value system.<sup>4</sup> The market streets of Surat were overcrowded with buyers and sellers. The shops on each side of the streets were more like pedlar-stalls and not like the European shops having a functional base.<sup>5</sup>

Surat was the headquarters of the English in western India from 1608 to 1687. Surat's importance in this respect could be realized by the fact that in 1657 the English East India Company decided to group all their Eastern settlements under one president and council in Surat, with four branches, viz., the Coromandel coast, Bengal, Persia and Bantam, each under an agent and council. The joint-stock organization enabled the Company to spread a large network of trading posts in the East and facilitated effective co-ordination of its personnel and resources. John Fryer writes about a very well-knit organizational structure of the English East India Company's factory in Surat, with a president at its head. Next to the president in the structural hierarchy was the accountant who maintained general accounts of Indian as well as the Surat business. He also acted as treasurer and signed all bills, though it was the broker who kept cash. Next to the accountant in importance was the warehouse keeper who received all Eastern commodities that had been bought and registered all European goods that were bought and sold. Under the warehouse keeper worked the purser marine who maintained accounts of all exported and imported goods, paid wages to seamen, provided wagons and porters and looked after the ship's stores. Last of all was the secretary who modelled all consultations, wrote letters and carried them to the president and council to be processed and signed. He also kept the Company's seal

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Crooke, op. cit., 282; V. Ball (ed), Travels in India by Jean Baptiste Tavernier, ii (London, 1889), 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Foster, A New Account of the East Indies by Hamilton, i, 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Rawlingson, A Voyage to Surat by J. Ovington, pp. 164-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For details see Tripathi, op. cit.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Crooke, op. cit., 248.

which was affixed to all passes and commissions. The secretary recorded all transactions and sent their copies to the Company.1

The Company's servants were classed into merchants, factors and writers. Fryer wrote: Some blue coat boys also have been entertained under notion of apprentices for several years, which being expired, if they can get security, they are capable of employments. The writers are obliged to serve five years for 10 l. [pound] per annum giving in a bond of 500 l. for good behaviour, all which time they serve under some of the forementioned officers; after which they commence Factors, and rise to preferment and trust, according to seniority or favour, and therefore have a 1,000 l. per annum bond exacted from them, and have their salary augmented to 20 l. per annum for three years, their entering into new indentures, are made senior factors, and lastly, Merchants after three years more; out of whom are those chief of factories, as places fall, and are allowed 40 l. per annum, during their stay in the Company's service, besides lodgings at the Company's charges.<sup>2</sup>

The president's council consisted of five persons. The president's emoluments were £500 per annum. The Company gave that post to a very able and deserving person. Half of his salary was paid in Surat and the other half was "reserved to be received at Home, in case of misdemeanour to make satisfaction". The president had to give a security bond of £70,000 sterling. The accountant who was next only to the president got only £72 per annum, a marked difference prevailing between the salaries of the two seniormost officers.

Irrespective of the differential salary levels, the Company's servants found the profit potentials from their Surat trade too tempting to resist. They engaged in private trade even though they were not officially permitted to do so. In 1630 President Richard Wylde himself was alleged by his colleagues to be carrying on private trade with the Surat banias in pepper. He was also suspected of having been involved in underhand dealings with Virji Vora to the Company's detriment. Wylde in turn accused Richard Boothy, "a wolf in sheep's clothing", of being grossly corrupt and cheating both the Company and Indian merchants. Even after Boothy ceased to be the Company's employee, he was suspected of having borrowed a large sum of money from his Indian creditors by making them believe that he was a counsellor of the Surat factory. The banias were too shrewd not to be aware of these goings-on in the Company's operations. They bribed the Company's factors, shipped their goods on Company's account and indulged in clandestine trade as their partners. The influence of these "base banian brokers and zarofes" (shroffs) on the working of the factory grew so powerful as to raise doubt whether the Company's affairs were really governed by the president and council or by the banias.4

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 215-7; J. Talboys Wheeler, Early Records of British India: A History of the English Settlements in India (London, 1878), pp. 29-31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> EFI, 1630-3, pp. 13-7, 151, 249.

To check the evil of private trade by the Company's factors the president and council of Surat passed an Act in December 1632, which provided that the culprit be dismissed from the Company's services. But the Act failed to create any major impact on the Company's employees and almost 30 years later Indian brokers were found to be trad. ing with no less a person than Mathew Andrews, the president of the Surat factory. Tired of these clandestine trading activities, the president, George Oxenden, decided to destroy the "nest of Vermine". But Oxenden did not succeed in putting his house in order and private trade continued to be a problem even in the later period.

If the activities of the banias and the Company's servants in Surat hindered the smooth functioning of the Company's trade, those of the Mughal officials proved disastrous for the mercantile communities of Surat. The Mughal officials in Surat, as in other parts of India not only took bribes but also often monopolized trade in several ways. Perhaps very few government institutions in India were so corrupt as the Surat customs house. When in 1619 prince Khurram charged the Surat factors with indulging in piracies, the latter retorted that "such of his officers and servants at Surratt as doth dayly seeke to stopp the course of our business to the end to extorte bribes from us for private gaine, which being denied them doth yet vex (us to) our prejudice".2 Finding that the goods for England and other countries could not be cleared from the Surat customs house without bribes, the Company's factors resolved to offer bribes to the officials, ranging from the chief customs official to the writers.3

It was not uncommon for the governor of Surat to visit the port at the time of the embarkation of ships and compel merchants and passengers to part with commodities for which he took a fancy. In 1638 the governor compelled Mandelslo to give him a bracelet of yellow amber in spite of the latter's protests.4 In 1650 the English complained that their goods were detained at the Surat customs house for an indefinite period and were returned in damaged condition if they refused to give bribes. There was, however, the other side of the picture. The customs officials inspected the passengers and their baggage thoroughly in order to prevent smuggling. But in spite of their efforts to root out this evil, professional smugglers and merchants continued to smuggle articles of great value and small size. Sir Thomas Roe, the English Ambassador at the court of Jahangir, admitted that his friends Richard Steele and Jackson had brought with them "the pearle and some other small matters stollen ashore, according to my order, which I received and gave quittance for".6

The Mughal officials interfered in trade and business in a way which obstructed the freedom of the business. They used their official position to make profits by monopolizing trade. In 1619 the Surat customs officer asked the English to supply him lead at a rate

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1618-21, p. 232.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> M.S. Commissariat (ed), Mandelslo's Travels in Western India A.D. 1638-9 (Oxford, 1931), p. <sup>3</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Quoted by Surendranath Sen (ed), Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri (Delhi, 1949), p. lvi.

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lower than the market price. The English refused to accept his demand as they thought that it would establish a dangerous precedent. But they could not prevent the Surat governor from having his way and in 1632 he not only monopolized the trade in lead but also prevented all other merchants from buying that commodity from any other sources. In 1630 he tried to persuade Virji Vora to make him a partner in some business, which the latter refused. Eight years later Vora had to suffer imprisonment. The same governor monopolized trade in pepper and other Deccan goods in 1638. In 1662 the governor of Surat not only fixed prices of goods but also tried to appropriate for himself middleman's profits.

The arbitrary actions of the governors partly resulted from the fact that the Surat governorships were farmed out by the emperors since Akbar's time and the nobles were keen to get these lucrative positions. In 1638 Muiz-ul-Mulk succeeded in securing the farm of the Surat port, mint and customs house by offering two lakh rupees more than his predecessor which in mahmudis was 72 lakh per annum. Soon he realized that he had overestimated the produce of the port, for by the middle of 1641 he calculated that he was short of the covenanted sum by 51 lakh mahmudis. Shahjahan summoned him to the court to explain the matters. Ultimately the emperor decided to abandon the system of farming the post and appointed salaried officials to receive the revenues. Jam Quali Beg who had been in charge of the Surat castle many years before was accordingly made governor of Surat in October 1641; he was to be assisted by a diwan and another official who was to attend especially to the customs house affairs. The mercantile community of Surat which had long been suffering from the extortions by the governors gratefully welcomed this change.<sup>5</sup>

Monopolistic tendencies were not merely the hallmark of the state but in fact reflected the general business environment as well. The organization of rings and commercial monopolies were the dominant features of the business system at least at the wholesale trade level. It was not uncommon for the richest Indian merchants to prevent others with less capital from buying and selling goods. The enormous liquid capital which a few Indian merchants possessed enabled them to monopolize trade at opportune moments. In 1634 Virji Vora monopolized trade in all the commodities in which Europeans were interested. President William Methwold and his council admitted:

The potency of Virjee Vorah (who hath bene the usuall merchant, and is now become the sole monopolist of all European commodities) is observed to bear such sway amongst all the inferior merchants of this towne that when they would often tymes buy (and pay greater prices) they are still restrayned, not daring to betray

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1618-21, pp. 106-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1630-3, p. 216.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> EFI, 1637-41, pp. 108-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1637-41, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

their intents to his knowledge and their owne suffereance, in as much that the tyme and price is still in his will and at his own disposure.1

Eight years later he monopolized the coral trade with the assistance of the governor. To force the English to sell him coral and other commodities on his own terms Viril Vora prevented all other merchants from visiting the English factory. The English were not sure whether a few merchants who did visit their factory were not really Virji Vora's own confidential agents.<sup>2</sup> In 1662 he succeeded in preventing merchants from purchasing the Company's copper. At the same time Virji Vora hindered free sale of the Company's coral "threatening all other buyers from dealing with us for it, whose greatness owes them all".<sup>3</sup> Earlier in 1625 he had obliged the English to buy his pepper worth £10,000 at the rate of 16½ mahmudis per maund instead of 16 mahmudis per maund which the English wanted to settle at. He did this by anticipating the demand for that commodity and buying it off in the Deccan markets before the English could procure it from that region.<sup>4</sup> Eagerness to get exclusive information, manipulating things and anticipating business trends were indeed the necessary apsects of large-scale transactions. Neither the European joint-stock organizations nor the Indian and Asian merchants who traded on a large scale could afford to ignore this significant aspect of the Surat trade.

An interesting phenomenon which emerged in Surat in the latter part of the 17th century was the practice of buying and selling goods in advance. In view of the uncertainties in the supply position resulting from frequent Maratha inroads on Surat and its surrounding areas and also on account of the growing incidents of piracies, the system of forward contract developed as a necessary feature of the wholesale trade. The very nature of this trade had caused the parties concerned to enter into contracts for ready stocks even in the first part of the century of which we get a number of instances. But the contracts for the goods bought and sold for delivery were a novel feature. Thus in 1668-9 two Indian merchants entered into a contract with the English Company and assured themselves of the commodities at prices specified in the contract. In 1670 Nanchand, a grandson of Virji Vora, contracted with the Company for its tin and copper expected to arrive by sea. Khwaja Minaz, an Armenian merchant, purchased broad cloth on behalf of Virji Vora. In 1672 another Indian merchant, Mirza Muazzam, entered into such a contract with the Company. 6

The emergence of forward contracts in India resulted from the needs of the European companies to sell their goods in a way that could facilitate multilateral trade. It was a European innovation in India, the earliest traces of which are found in Surat. These contracts took place to serve the needs of the times. The English East India Company, for

<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> EFI, 1642-5, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> EFI, 1661-4, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> EFI, 1624-9, pp. 90-4.

<sup>5</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid. p. 209.

instance, encouraged forward contracts mainly to safeguard itself against the possible price depression resulting from its European competitors dumping the goods on the port. The Indian merchants on their part preferred to purchase goods on forward contract basis not so much to make large profits as to invest capital in "sollid unperishable commoditys" at a time when markets were becoming increasingly subservient to political factors such as wars and the state's social and economic policies.<sup>2</sup>

The business ethos in the 17th century reflected moods which were influenced by such factors as the state's policies and the law and order situation on land and sea. Taking these factors into consideration, it could be stated that the period which preceded Aurangzeb's reign (1658-1707) was more favourable for the growth of business activities. Aurangzeb's period was marked by his policy of religious discrimination which adversely affected Surat's non-Muslim mercantile communities. It was also during his reign that the increasing Maratha raids on Surat and its vicinity proved a menace to trade and commerce. So long as the state was sufficiently powerful to maintain law and order, it could at least protect business from external dangers. Thus in 1618-9 European encroachments on the Red Sea route had to contend with the non-cooperation of a group of Surat merchants who threatened to stop the supply of calicoes and other goods to them. These merchants were emboldened by prince Khurram's reply to the Europeans that he did not want them to prosper at the cost of the Indian merchants.3 In 1624 Emperor Jahangir, by issuing orders to seize the goods of the English factory, compelled the English to return the goods of the Indian merchants which they had seized along with their ships. In 1636 President William Methwold found himself imprisoned when English pirates seized a Gujarati ship.5 Aurangzeb was strong enough to take retaliatory measures against "the hat-men" (the English), but he preferred conciliatory measures or sought help from other Europeans such as the French, the Portuguese or the Dutch to punish the English.6 This change of policy under Aurangzeb resulted mainly from the dangers which the Marathas posed to the empire by their uninterrupted inroads in the western region.

Aurangzeb's religious views, unlike those of his predecessors, proved almost ruinous to the trade and commerce of Surat. Before Aurangzeb's time little discrimination was practised on religious grounds in matters of trade. In fact we often come across instances where the non-Muslim Gujarati merchants were consulted in trade matters by the Mughal authorities. Pietro della valle, an Italian traveller, observed in 1623 that the Muslims and the Hindus "live all mixt together, and peaceably because the grand Mogul, to whom

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<sup>1</sup> EFI, 1668-9, p. 184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> William Foster, England's Quest of Eastern Trade (London, 1933), pp. 291-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> EFI, 1624-9, p. vi. <sup>5</sup> EFI, 1634-6, p. 254.

Jadunath Sarkar, "The Affairs of the English Factory at Surat 1694-1700 from Original Persian Records", Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings of Meetings, v (January 1923), 8-10.

Among the prominent merchants were Rustamji Nanabhai, Virji Vora, Shantidas and Hari Vaishya, Patel, op. cit., pp. 55-60; EFI, 1624-9, pp. 27-30; Dave, op. cit., pp. 1-35; M.S. Commissariat, Studies in the History of Gujarat (Bombay, 1935), pp. 53-69.

Gujarat is now subject, although he be a Mahometan, makes no difference in his dominions between the one sort and the others".¹ The taxation policy of the early Mughals was not influenced by the religious diversities of their subjects, though the Europeans, particularly the English, got certain concessions through diplomatic pressure and bribes. The foreign merchants had to give costly presents to the Mughals which "more than made up for the advantages they enjoyed from exemption".² During Aurangzeb's reign the pattern of the customs duties at the Surat port was 5 per cent for the Hindus, 3¾ per cent for the Europeans and 2 per cent for the Muslims.³ The European merchants were exempted from poll duties which the Hindus paid. They were also exempted from certain inland duties.⁴

In keeping with Aurangzeb's policies, the Surat authorities persecuted the Hindu and the Jain merchants who spent large sums to save their places of worship from being defiled or destroyed. In 1669 a nephew of Tulsidas Parekh turned a Muslim and another bania committed suicide to escape conversion. To protest against these incidents about 8,000 Surat banias left for Broach on 23 November 1669. Before they took this action these merchants, through the representation of Bhimji Parekh, tried to persuade Gerald Aungier, the president of the Surat factory, to allow them to migrate to Bombay. But as that plan did not materialize, they ultimately migrated to Broach. To compel the government to give up its policy of religious persecution the Surat mahajan (merchant guild) now ordered all its members to stop business and close down their shops. The effects of these events on the Surat trade could best be summarized in the words of Aungier who informed the Company's directors as follows:

Ever since the flight of the Bannians, the trade of Surat hath suffered great obstruction and it's the opinion of many wise men that it will prove of fatall consequences to the utter ruine of it.... The people in Surat suffered great want, for the Bannians having found themselves under severe penalties not to open any of their shops without order from their Mahagen, or general councill, there was not any provisions to be gott, the tanksall (mint) and custom house shut, no money to be procured soe much as for house expences much lesse for trade, which was wholly at a stand and soe it will continue till their (Surat merchants who had left for Broach) returne.<sup>6</sup>

The mahajan continued its agitation till at last the government found no other alternative but to ask the 8,000 banias to return to Surat and promise not to oppress them and the members of their fold.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wilfried Blunt, Pietro's Pilgrimage: A Journey to India and back at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century (London, 1953), p. 242.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D. Pant, The Commercial Policy of the Moguls (Bombay, 1930), p. 89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 231.

<sup>4</sup> Om Prakash Singh, "Surat and her Trade in the Second Half of the 17th Century" (Ph. D. thesis, University of Delhi, 1963), pp. 167-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Shivaji Tercentenary Memorial Series, English Records on Shivaji 1659-1682, i (Poona, 1931), 136-7.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 138.

<sup>7</sup> EFI, 1668-9, p. 205.

The two main factors which arrested the growth of Surat as a trading centre since the 1660s were the Maratha raids on Surat and European piracies on the seas. Jadunath Sarkar estimates Shivaji's gains from his first sack of Surat (1664) at over one crore of rupees. He carried with him a very large booty when he again plundered Surat in 1670. Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad, a contemporary chronicler of Shivaji, estimates the total gains of Shivaji from his two raids at five crores of hons which would come to about one crore 75 lakhs of rupees at the currency rates prevalent at that time. The activities of the mercantile communities of Surat received a setback on account of almost annual alarm that Shivaji's troops were either approaching the town or were about to invade the neighbouring country. The completion of the brick walls round Surat in the late 1670s did not completely remove people's fear of Maratha or Rajput invasions.

During the last three decades of the 17th century piracy became a normal feature of sea-borne trade on the Indian Ocean. The English pirates were among the most notorious ones and it was commonly believed in Surat that the servants of the English factory had secret dealings with them.<sup>3</sup> The imprisonment of the Company's factors and confiscation of the Company's goods as retaliatory measures did not improve the situation. Nor did the threats of the Surat merchants to stop trade relations with them prove of any avail and piracy continued as an ever-growing menace to Surat's overseas trade. As John Bruce observes, the trade of Surat "was in more danger from the pirates than from the violence of the Mughal governor, or the invasions of the Marathas". <sup>1</sup>

These negative factors naturally tended to discourage trade. Nevertheless, it would be too naive to conclude that the shifting of the Company's headquarters in 1687 and other internal factors resulted in the eclipse of Surat as a trading centre. The business system developed in Surat over a period of more than half a century did not break down, nor did its trade decline as suddenly as is commonly believed. For though Bombay enjoyed certain advantages in terms of internal security, the Surat merchants were still cautious in migrating to the island town and even Bhimji Parekh who had earlier requested the Surat president more than once to help the banias migrate to Bombay was hesitant to leave Surat in 1678. One Nima Parekh of Diu, a Portuguese territory, also thought that the time was not yet ripe to settle down in Bombay. Bombay was considered to be an unhealthy island containing a population of 60,000 (as compared to 200,000 in Surat in the middle of the seventies), most of whom were poor and destitute. At the turn of the 17th

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See A.R. Kulkarni, Maharashtra in the Age of Shivaji (Poona, 1969), p. 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> As shown by Kulkarni, hon's value varied between rupees 2½ and rupees 3¾ in Shivaji's time, Ibid. pp. 130, 170, 240.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dennis Kincaid, British Social Life in India 1608-1937 (London, 1939), p. 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> John Bruce, Annals of the Honorable East India Company from the Establishment by the Charter of the Queen Elizabeth, 1600, to the Union of the London and the English East India Companies, 1707-9, iii (London, 1810), 238.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> EFI, 1670-7, p. xii.

According to John Fryer Bombay's population was 60,000. Alexander Hamilton estimated Surat's population at 200,000 for the same period. Ibid.; Foster, A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton, i, 89.

century Bombay was too undeveloped to rival Surat's pre-eminent position as the chief

The existence of a large number of trading vessels owned by the Surat merchants at the turn of the century is again indicative of Surat's position. The growing insecurity on the Indian Ocean, it may be remembered, was a problem to be faced not merely by Indians; non-Indians faced it as well and occasionally European vessels too were plundered on the high seas. The Surat merchants increased safety measures to avert the dangers on the high seas. They arranged through pressure on the political authorities, for their ships' convoy by European cruisers. They increased European elements in the crew of their ships by paying decent salaries and granting certain privileges to them. Not infrequently they transported their goods on ships owned by European companies or their servants or private ship-owners. The fact that the ship-owners vied with each other for freight suggests the prevalence of competitive freight rates at the end of the 17th century.

Speaking of Surat in 1695, Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri, an Italian traveller, said that it was a principal mart in the East receiving a large variety of goods from the manufacturing centres of India for export.2 The accounts of European travellers who visited Surat in the late 17th century clearly show the existence of extremely rich merchants, though they preferred not to exhibit their wealth. These merchants supplied goods to European companies and interlopers, traded with Eastern countries, particularly with the Persian Gulf ports, and controlled a substantial part of the Indian coastal trade.3 They reduced their tax burdens by inducing their Muslim counterparts to trade on their behalf.

One of the effective ways in which the Surat merchants exercised influence on European companies was through lending large amounts to them. That the English Company's debt in Surat was a recurrent phenomenon could be shown by the fact that while in 1669 its debt to the Surat money-lenders was £,60,000, in February 1673 it amounted to £80,000. In July 1674 the amount rose to £105, 000 and in 1694 it reached a staggering figure of £ 257,062.5 As late as 1697 complaints were made against the Company's inability to repay the loan to its Surat bankers and money-lenders. In 1672 the English Company paid £ 8,000 to its creditors on interest alone.

The completion of the brick walls round Surat in the late 1670s made it difficult for the invaders to attack the town. Soon the business situation improved and it became increasingly difficult for the walled city to accommodate the merchants and artisans who were migrating to Surat from other regions. This phenomenon resulted in the emergence of large suburbs around the city.6 Most of the European travellers who visited Surat in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For details see Bruce, op. cit., pp. 19-160.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Foster, A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton, i, 133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S.A. Khan, The East India Trade in the xviith Century in its Political and Economic Aspects (Oxford, 1923), pp. 257-8; Foster, A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton, i, 116-8; EFI, 1670-7, 233; Sen, op. cit., pp. 163-4; Rawlingson, A Voyage to Surat by J. Ovington, p. 133; Crooke, op. cit., i, 289.

<sup>4</sup> Pant, op. cit., p. 231.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Singh, op. cit., pp. 159-60; Khan, op. cit., pp. 229-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Foster, A New Account of the East Indies by Alexander Hamilton, i, 87-8.

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for ne ho ce in the late 17th century did not fail to notice vigorous business activities of the Surat merchants in the midst of challenges and as late as 1705 Hamilton noticed a large number of Hindu and Muslim merchants actively engaged in various branches of trade and commerce.<sup>1</sup>

Surat provides a classic example of the remarkable vitality and resilience of the Indian business system to respond to the opportunities and challenges of the 17th century. The fact that the members of the non-vaishya castes came forward to assume business roles in spite of their religious traditions and conventions shows that Surat experienced some "propitious moments" which weakened, if not shattered, the customary occupational barriers.

In spite of the emergence of some healthy trends, the Indian business communities in Surat failed to bring about any qualitative change in business practices or production processes. As pointed out by Tripathi, they remained overwhelmingly wedded to liquidity preference.<sup>2</sup>

Indian merchants carried on their activities in the teeth of challenges of the later period. Hence to explain the Indian failure (to adapt to new business norms) purely in political terms is to overlook other factors. One of the reasons why the joint-stock associations referred to by Arasaratnam in the case of Coromandel coast did not emerge in Surat was that throughout the 17th century the Surat merchants competed with the Europeans and never assumed the role of passive "suppliers" of cotton cloth or any other merchandise to the European companies. They held an enormous amount of liquid money and acted as buyers or sellers, preventing smaller traders from dealing with their rivals.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tripathi, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> S. Arasaratnam, "Indian Merchants and their Trading Methods circa 1700", Indian Economic and Social History Review, iii (March 1966), 86-7.

# TEXTILE TRADE AND INDUSTRY IN BENGAL SUBA, 1650-1720

## Sushil Chaudhuri

An attempt is made in this paper to analyse the nature, pattern and organization of textile trade and industry in Bengal Suba in the second half of the 17th century and first two decades of the 18th century. It is indicated here that the export trade in Bengal textiles had a phenomenal growth resulting from a great demand for these commodities in the European markets and there was a corresponding increase in textile production in Bengal during this period. So far as the European trade in Bengal textiles is concerned, we have ample quantitative data, but our information about the textile trade carried on by the Asian merchants is very scanty. Moreover, we are handicapped in our analysis by the paucity of material on the organization of the textile industry. But despite these limitations, it is possible to indicate the broad pattern and organization of textile trade and industry in Bengal during the period under review.

In the overall picture of the English Company's export trade textiles were most important both in volume and value. It is common knowledge that the European companies began to display interest in the Indian textile trade in the early 17th century for the purpose of bartering cotton piece-goods for pepper and spices in the Indonesian archipelago. And the direct trade in textiles between Europe and India developed as an essential by-product of this "earlier and more urgent necessity". The most striking feature of the English East India Company's textile trade from Bengal was a boom in export in the early 1680s under the stimulus of a rapid expansion in demand for calicoes in the European markets which continued vigorously, with the exception of a brief interruption following the Bengal war in 1686, into the following decades.

I

The multiplicity of the types of textiles exported from Bengal renders their identification and proper division into different categories an exceedingly difficult task. One finds

### MANUSCRIPT SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

A.G.D. Accountant General's Department, Range II, India Office (Commonwealth Relations) Library, London.

B.P.C. Bengal Public Consultations, India Office Library.

D.B. Despatch Books, India Office Library.

EFI, English Factories in India, ed, W. Foster.

K.A. Koloniaal Archief, Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague.

O.C. Original Correspondence, India Office Library.

Factory Records-Calcutta, Hugli, Miscellaneous-India Office Library.

at least 75, if not more, different names of piece-goods in contemporary records. It is not easy to identify some of them such as umbers, mahmudiaties, atchabannies, abrowahs, bulchols, coopes, doodamies, etc. However, this limitation notwithstanding, the piece-goods exported by the Company can be divided into three main types—first, silk piece-goods; secondly, mixed piece-goods, that is, piece-goods of mixed silk and cotton; and thirdly, cotton piece-goods, plain or painted. In addition, there was a category of miscellaneous goods consisting of quilts, tablecloths, plushes, velvets, etc.

Bengal silk piece-goods were known to the English as the taffatie or taffeta and the Dutch termed it armosijnen.1 The word taffeta was current in medieval Europe in a rather vague sense to imply fine cloth, usually of a silky and glossy quality. When the Europeans introduced the term into India, it became mixed with Persian tafta, "a glossy twist", already in use as a term for silk. Most of the Bengal taffetas were produced in areas around Kasimbazar. Some of the different types of taffaties were known by such names as restaes (striped taffaties) or gold pumbers (a sort of taffaties of deep gold colours and made of thicker than ordinary silk).2 Among other silk piece-goods exported by the English Company were sarcenetts, jamwars and silk lungees produced mainly in Kasimbazar area, silk handkercheifs, neck cloths and atlasses woven mostly in Hugli and the Balasore area. Silk handkerchiefs were also procured in Dacca. Taffetas, though the most important single item in the list of the Company's export from Bengal in the second half of the 17th century, lost their predominance in the first two decades of the 18th century. It seems that throughout the period under review mixed fabrics and cotton goods comprised the largest bulk export. The mixed piece-goods exported by the Company were mainly allabanees, cuttanees, carridaries (or choradarries), chucklaes, cherconnaes, cushtaes, doreas, elatches, ginghams, jamdanees, nehallewars, nillaes, peniascoes, sooses, seersuckers and mandilla. Of these, ginghams and nillaes, woven in the neighbourhood of Hugli and Balasore, enjoyed a predominance in the Company's export list during the second half of the 17th century while doreas, woven in Hugli and the Malda region, ruled the roost in the first two decades of the 18th century.

But it was cotton piece-goods which numerically far surpassed other piece-goods, whether of silk or mixed varieties, in the Company's export list. Of the calicoes, again, plain cotton or plain muslin goods comprised the bulk of the Company's export. The painted cotton goods generally known as chintz began to be exported only in the last decade of the 17th century and the European demand for Indian chintz of all kinds was soon at its peak.<sup>3</sup> The chintz came mainly from Patna and were of a cheaper and comparatively

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<sup>1 &</sup>quot;een Indische sijden stof; taf".

<sup>2</sup> D.B., 89, f. 266; 93, ff. 32-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Irwin's contention (John Irwin and P. R Schwartz, Studies in Indo-European Textile History, p. 45) that "Chintz goods were of insignificant importance in Bengal trade" does not seem to be tenable as in the second decade of the 18th century the English Company exported quite large number of chintz, numerically surpassed only by such cotton piece-goods as baftas, cossaes, emerties, gurrahs, mulmuls, romalls and tanjeebs. In 1711-2 the Company exported 21,397 pieces of chintz at the invoice price of Rs 85,050. The Dutch Company ordered during the first two decades of the 18th century on an average about 10,000 pieces a year. It is true, however, that Bengal chintz could never compete in importance with those of western India and the Coromandel.

inferior grade to those from Coromandel and Gujarat. Patna also provided such cotton piece-goods as emerties and luckowries. Among other cotton piece-goods exported by the Company were chillaes, bastas, dungarees (the Dutch dongerijs), dimities, photaes, orungshies, chandanees and puttas. But it was the better known muslin that enjoyed supremacy in the Company's export list. The Company, however, did not export much of the very finest and most expensive Bengal muslin, famous from Roman times, perhaps partly because the limited supply was monopolized by local merchants for exclusive sale to the nobility and partly because of the unsuitability of this material for the climate in Europe. The muslin exported by the Company comprised such different varieties as allaballees, addaties, chowtars, cossaes, serhaudconnaes, gurrahs, humhums, mahmudbannies, mulmuls, nainsook, sannoes, tanjeebs, terrendums, seerbands and rehings. Most of these were woven in areas around Dacca and Malda, though some like mulmuls and mahmudbannies were also produced in the neighbouring regions of Hugli and others like sannoes around Balasore. The embroidered piecegoods were mostly on the finer varieties of muslin such as mulmuls, tanjeebs, cossaes or humhums. The quality of the different types of muslin woven in different areas varied widely, as did their prices. We refrain from an attempt at their classification according to fineness and price as such an attempt is fraught with the danger of producing misleading results.1

II

An analysis of the Company's orders for Bengal piece-goods reveals that in the early years the demand for silk and cotton piece-goods was insignificant in the overall structure of the Company's export trade from Bengal. In February 1651 the factors in Bengal were asked to invest only one-sixth of their small capital in cloth, mainly sannoes and atlasses.<sup>2</sup> An indication of the first boom in the demand for Bengal textiles is to be found in the order

<sup>1</sup> Irwin classified the varieties of muslin "according to the maximum prices paid" in the following order of fineness: tanjeebs, mulmuls, nainsooks, terrendums, aliballies, seerhaudconnaes, etc. (op. cit., pp. 49-50). But this classification seems to be completely erroneous if we look at the contracts made by the Company with Calcutta merchants in the first two decades of the 18th century (cf. B.P.C., Range I, 1-4). Seerhaudconnaes which finds sixth place in Irwin's classification was actually the most expensive and hence deserves the first place, if, as Irwin claims, maximum prices paid is to be the criterion of fineness of cloth. Both in 1710 and 1711 the Company paid Rs 26 per piece of seerhaudconnaes (42 co. x 2 co.) while for tanjeebs (Santose, 42 co. x 24 co.) the maximum price paid during these years was only Rs 7½ per piece (B.P.C. Range I, 2, ff.11-7, 81a-85a). The price of ordinary tanjeebs whether from Dacca or Santose (sizes varying between 40 co. x 2 co. and 40 co. x 2½ co.) throughout the second decade of the 18th century ranged between Rs 6.14 As and Rs 8.8 As while the maximum price paid for flowered tanjeebs woven with silk was only Rs 20 per piece (40 co. x 2 co.). Even for the mulmuls the Company had to pay more than it did for tanjeebs. The maximum price for mulmuls Sevagepore (40 co. x 2½ co.) was Rs 8.12 As and Rs 16 for mulmuls Dacca (40 co. x 2 co.) and mulmuls Santapore (40 co. x 2½ co.). And for flowered mulmuls woven with silk the Company paid Rs 22 per piece (40 co. x 2 co.). So it is clear that mulmuls were more expensive than tanjeebs and as such should precede tanjeebs in order of fineness. Again, in Irwin's classification even nainsooks and terrendums preceded seerhaudconnaes while actually they should come only after the latter, if maximum price paid is the criterion of fineness. While a piece of seerhaudconnaes (42 co. x 2 co.) cost Rs 18 and Rs 12 8 As respectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> O.C., 19 Feb. 1651, no. 2208, 22; *EFI*, 1651-4, p.45; O.C., 25 Feb. 1651, no. 2210, 22; *EFI*, 1651-4, p.47.

sent out in 1675-6 for 98,000 pieces while in 1669-70 the order was only for 26,850 pieces. In other words, within the span of six years the order for textiles had increased by four times. But it was from about the beginning of the 1680s that there was a remarkable rise in the demand for textiles from Bengal. In the year 1680-1 the Company ordered for 206,400 pieces which went up to 229,200 pieces next year, eventually rising to 662,800 pieces in 1682-3 and 682,300 pieces in 1683-4. This, however, was followed by a slump in the demand. But from about the middle of the 1690s there was again a sharp rise. In 1695-6 the Company ordered 417,500 pieces and up to 1716-7 the order ranged between 250,000 and 300,000 pieces. Again, a boom began in 1717-8 when 415,000 pieces were ordered, which rose to 480,000 pieces in 1719-20. The Dutch order too was considerable and seems to have ranged between 250,000 and 300,000 pieces per year in the first two decades of the 18th century.

An obvious question that arises is: what were the precise underlying factors for the unprecedented growth of textile exports from Bengal at the beginning of the 1680s. The plausible answer is that it was due partly to the greater competitive power of the Indian piece-goods in prices in comparison with the traditional fabrics manufactured in Europe and partly to a revolutionary change in the consumer taste in England and the continent. A contributory factor was, however, the Act of 1678 which forbade the importation of French silks and cloths together with French wine, salt and paper. Though Bengal silks and piece-goods did not compare favourably in quality with French and Italian fabrics. the former had the advantage of being very much cheaper and hence available to a larger section of the people. Moreover, there was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Company to make Bengal piece-goods, especially taffetas, look like Italian silks or fabrics. As early as 1659 the directors wrote to the Bengal factors that taffetas would be gummed in England which "would then be as glossy as Italian silks". Again, in 1663 they asked the factors to "cause all taffaties to be made as near to the Italian fabrics as you can". 3 So far as the change in consumer taste was concerned, the "Indian craze" set in about the 1680s and was a marked feature of the last decade of the 17th century. 4 It is unnecessary to describe this trend in fashion,5 but it obviously operated as an active economic factor. The nature and extent of this fashion is revealed by J. Cary's pamphlet of 1695 which states:

It was scarce thought about twenty years since that we should ever see Calicoes, the Ornaments of our greatest Gallants (for such they are, whether we call them Muslins, shades or anything else) when they were then rarely used, save in Shrouds for the Dead, and chiefly among the Poor who could not go to the Price of finer Linnen, and yet were unwilling to imitate the Rich; but now few think themselves well dresst till they are made up in Calicoes, both Men and Women, Calico Shirts, Neckcloths, Cuffs, Pocket-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E. Lipson., An Introduction to the Economic History of England, iii (Revised Edition, London, 1956), 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D.B., 28 Jan. 1659, 85, f. 199; *EFI*, 1655-60, pp. 275-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> D.B., 2 Jan. 1663, 86, f. 202.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> K. Glamann, Dutch Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740 (The Hague, 1958), p. 142.

For description of fashion see Slomann, Bizarre Designs in Silks.

Handkerchiefs for the former, Headdresses, Nightroyls, Hoods, Sleeves, Aprons, Gowns, Petticoats and what not for the latter besides India-Stockings for both Sexes".

No less revealing than this was the speech by Pollexsen before the Board of Trade in 1696 describing the state of Indian commodities in 1681. He said:

As ill weeds grow apace, so these manufactured goods from India met with such a kind reception that from the greatest gallants to the meanest Cook Maids, nothing was thought so fit to adorn their Persons as the Fabrick from India.<sup>2</sup>

The European companies were well aware of this great change in consumer taste and there began a race for procuring novelties. The directors of the English Company wrote in 1681:

Note this for a constant and general Rule that in all flowered Silks you change the fashion and flower every year as much as you can, for English Ladies, and they say the French and other Europeans will give twice as much for a new thing not seen in Europe before though worse, than they will give for a better silk of the same fashion worn the former year.<sup>3</sup>

In July 1682 the directors perhaps made the most pointed remark about the change in fashion: "... nothing pleases so much as variety everyone desiring something that their neighbours have not like it". 4

The English Company traded not only in silk and mixed and cotton piece-goods from the 1680s but also in such miscellaneous commodities as plushes, velvets, satins and quilts. In April 1681 the directors wrote to Hugli Agency:

Set your weavers' inventions on work to make Plushes, Velvets, and Satins as fine, rich and as strong as the best usually worn and of the same breadths; this is nothing so difficult but may be effected where the material silk and midwife labour are so cheap as with you.<sup>5</sup>

In December that year the factors were asked to send Flanders and French diaper-commonly used in England—which "may be made and brought from India upon much easier term than from any place of the world and that would be a national advantage, also as a profit to us and an increase of the English navigation if we could introduce into common use the Indian Diapers for Napkins and Tablecloths". Next year the Company asked the Bengal factors to send 500 silk quilts yearly as "the use of Rugs and Blankets grows out of request" "by reason of moths and the increase of the riches of our nation". In the same letter the directors asked the factors "for the setting afoot of a linen manufacture in the Bay for sailcloth and such kind of cloth as Lockerams, Dowlas, Holland and other foreign kinds which this nation is yearly supplied with from France,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. Cary, A Discourse concerning the East India Trade (London, 1696), p. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> India Office Tracts, 83, Tract no. 7, p. 50.

<sup>\*</sup> D.B., 20 May 1681, 89, f. 352.

<sup>4</sup> D.B., 5 July 1682, 90, f. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> D.B., 22 Apr. 1681, 89, f. 331.

<sup>6</sup> D.B., 30 Dec. 1681, 89, f. 437.

<sup>7</sup> D.B., 5 July 1682, 90, f. 7.

Germany, Flanders and Holland to the great diminution of our wealth and the increase of theirs, without any kind of benefit to the English navigation". All these only indicate that the Company was eager to expand its trade from Bengal in as many varieties of textiles as possible.

A noted earlier, silk piece-goods, mainly taffetas, held an undisputed supremacy in the Company's export list from Bengal throughout the second half of the 17th century. In 1684 the Court of Directors wrote to the agent and council in Hugli: "Plain taffaties of all sorts are certainly the most staple commodity India affords and it is impossible for you ever to send us too many of them".2 They wrote in the same vein four years later: "Your taffaties are a noble commodity of which you can never send enough being well made and well bought".3 It was only from the beginning of the 18th century that silk piecegoods as well as mixed ones lost their predominance in the Company's export following the Act of 1700 prohibiting such goods in England.4 The national concern, however, over the large imports of silks and piece-goods and its impact on English domestic industries was gaining ground from about the beginning of the 1680s. We shall not enter into the details of the increasing opposition to import of silks and manufactured goods or the impact of such imports on English silk and weaving industry which has already been discussed by Shaffat Ahmed Khan.5 We note a few things only to indicate the nature and extent of the opposition to import of Indian manufactured silks and how the Company met this.

As early as 1677 concern was voiced over the rapid increase in Indian imports in these words: "One commodity more ruins us and that is Calico which destroys more the use of Wool than all things besides".6 Similarly in 1680 a pamphleteer tried to pinpoint the grave danger to the English silk industry resulting from the steep rise in the import of Indian textiles. He wrote:

The result is that masters break; Journeymen run away, having no Trade. Some fly to the Mint and Privileged places. Some to Holland; some to Ireland. Some starve to death at home with their Wives and Children. Multitudes turn upon the parishes. Houses empty. Prisons full.7

The Company, however, tried to justify the import of wrought silks by pointing out that a great part of these were again shipped out to France, Holland and other foreign countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D.B., 30 Oct. 1684, 90, f. 382.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> D.B., 27 Aug. 1688, 91, f. 575.

The Act of 1700 laid down that "from Sept. 29, 1701 all manufactured silks, Bengals and stuffs mixed with silk or herba, of the manufacture of Persia, China or East Indies and all calicoes painted, dyed, printed or stained there which are or shall be imported into this kingdom of England, dominion of Wales and Town of Berwick on Tweed, shall not be worn or otherwise used within this Kingdom and also of 6200 also of £200 penalty on the persons having or selling any of them", D.B., 93, f. 271.

S.A. Khan, East India Trade in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1923).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Col. Birch quoted Ibid. p. 163.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Quoted Ibid. p. 159.

Wrought silks, the Company argued, were, moreover, the "strongest, cheapest and the most durable that come from any part of the world". Nor did their wearing hinder, it was argued, the silk manufacture in England; "they do only hinder the importation of the like quantity from France and Italy". Still the Company was forced to confess that "wrought silks, flowered or striped, do a little impede the growth of silk manufactures in England".

The Company justified the import of calicoes on the ground that it "is a most useful and necessary commodity and serves instead of the like quantities of French, Dutch and Flanders Linens". It argued that the nation thus saved not only "two to three 100 thousand pounds in its expense; but also as it hinders so far the enriching those Neighbour-Nations, from whose greatness this Kingdom might fear most prejudice". However, the result of the Act of 1700 prohibiting the import into England "of wrought silks, Bengals and Stuffs mixed with silk or herba" was an increase in the import of white calicoes and muslins which were then printed in England. The Act no doubt caused concern among Bengal factors who wrote in 1702:

All white goods are so very cheap in England and goods worked with silk and cotton being forbid to be worn, sells for loss so that we know not what to order about Cloth Investments until we received our Masters' advices.<sup>3</sup>

But the Act does not seem to have vitally affected the export of textiles from Bengal, except for a few years immediately following its enactment. Therefore, in 1720 another Act was passed prohibiting the use or wearing of printed calicoes in England. But as these articles were allowed to come to England on condition of their being reshipped, the export of cotton and silk piece-goods from Bengal continued to increase steadily even after 1720.4

#### III

On the supply side the competition was a triangular one among the English, Dutch and indigenous merchants. The main centres of supply of Bengal textiles were Kasimbazar, Dacca, Malda, Hugli, Balasore and Patna, where indigenous traders were already engaged

- <sup>1</sup> Childe, "The East India Trade in the most National of all Foreign Trades, 1681", India Office Tracts, 83, Tract no.1, pp. 18-9; Reply to the Allegations of the Turkey Co., quoted in S.A. Khan, op. cit., pp. 158-9.
- <sup>2</sup> Papillon, The East India Trade a most Profitable Trade to the Kingdom (London, 1677), p. 10.
- 3 Factory Records, Calcutta, 8, pt. ii, f. 149.
- <sup>4</sup> S. Bhattacharya, The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal (London, 1954), pp. 158-9.

<sup>5</sup> Geographical analysis of piece-goods in the Company's orders for Bengal

Areas	Orders sent out Nov. 1681	Orders sent out Aug. 1682	Orders sent out Dec. 1683
Kasimbazar Hugli Balasore Dacca Malda	84,100 pieces 23,500 ,, 72,500 ,, 21,300 ,, 27,800 ,,	110,200 ,, 162,000 ,, +16 ,, 81,500 ,, +12 ,,	208,000 pieces + 20 bales 158,300 " + 16 " 158,000 " + 12 " 71,500 " + 12 " 86,500 " + 20 "

(Compiled from D.B., 89 and 90)

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in an extensive trade in piece-goods long before the advent of the European companies. Even in Malda—as Richard Edwards reported in 1676, a few years before the establishment of the English factory there—the chief traders were the "Factors of Agra, Gujarat and Benaras Merchants who yearly send them fifteen to twenty five Patelas1 whose lading consists of cossaes, mulmuls and mundeels and elatches of all sorts, valued at about one Lack each Patela and about the half of that amount by landing said goods and raw silk". Besides, about three lakhs of rupees went yearly to Dacca in elatches and coarse cloth and about the same value to petty merchants of Rajmahal and Murshidabad and other places.2 It was quite natural that indigenous merchants, besides the Dutch, should have offered keen competition to the English in all the centres of supply. It is difficult to ascertain the impact of this triangular competition on the market prices of textiles. However, from incidental references it can be said in general that the presence of too many buyers enhanced the prices. It was reported in 1676 that the Dutch who were in Malda before the English were able to buy muslins at a much cheaper rate than when English demand afterwards had increased the competition. Thus pieces measuring 10 yards by 11 yards cost at first Rs 6 to 10 per piece against Rs 9 to 15 in Master's time (about 1676). That means the rise in price was about 50 per cent.3

But sometimes concentration of too many weavers at one place resulted in lowering the prices of their products, the heavy demand notwithstanding. Mathias Vincent reported in 1676 that the English factory set up at Kasimbazar induced a large number of weavers to gather there which resulted in the lowering of prices of taffaties. A piece of taffatie, as Vincent stated, which used to cost Rs 15 about 12 or 13 years ago, was then "made and sent home" at about six or seven rupees, that is, the price fell by well over 50 per cent. The English factors, however, often complained of dearer prices of textiles resulting from competition from other merchants. It is very much evident from the Company's records that it was apprehensive about its weavers being lured away by the Dutch. In 1684 the Dacca factors reported that Mathuradas, Raghunath and Ramnarain—all Company's merchants—sent many agents to Dacca and the neighbourhood and they feared that the weavers would raise the price of goods "to see so many buyers". The rivalry and competition between the Old and New Company also led to a sharp rise in the prices of textiles in the early years of the 18th century. The factors of the New Company reported in 1700 that "goods became exceeding dear at the aurungs even beyond what was usual for tho'

A large flat-bottomed boat.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> R.C. Temple, ed, The Diaries of Streynsham Master, i (London, 1911), 399-400; Factory Records, Misc., xiv, ff. 334-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Temple, op. cit., i, 139,399; Factory Records, Misc., xiv, ff. 335-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Temple, op. cit., i, 139; ii, 11; Factory Records, Misc., xiv, ff. 327-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Factory Records, Hugli, x, f. 207.

they did use to be dear at the ports in time of shipping yet now many goods were dear or dearer at the marts for investments, the demand was so great". There is little doubt that the Indian merchant-middlemen found the trade in piece-goods quite profitable and were sure of a market for what they could provide and that was the reason why at the end of our period even the shroffs "fell into the dealing so largely in piece goods",2

## IV

As indicated earlier, it is not possible to build up a coherent history of the price movements of textiles and their fluctuations throughout the period under review. Textiles were manufactured in Bengal at this time at the level of cottage industry and the technique of weaving varied from one place to another. The Company's exports were composed of a wide range of varieties which differed from one another in size, quality, texture and colours. This multiplicity of types was naturally reflected in an equally wide range of prices. Consequently it is not very easy to estimate what effect the movement of prices had on the purchases by the Company since the same type of cloth could display a wide variation in price even in one particular year depending on size, quality and the place of production.3 However, it seems from the contracts between the Company and Calcutta merchants in the second decade of the 18th century that the price of calicoes (the size and the place of production remaining constant) did not show much fluctuation. 4 Of course, it is certain that the Company derived sufficient profit from the textile trade<sup>5</sup> and was not concerned much even if the cost prices went up. As early as 1670 the directors wrote to Bengal: "We find the Calicoes in your parts to be dearer than in other places, yet we are unwilling wholly to leave of the trade thereof in the Bay".6

Turning to the actual exports, we find that the textiles exported by the Company up to the 1670s were significant neither quantitatively nor financially. In the two years 1663-4 and 1664-5 the Company exported only about 24,000 pieces on an average at the invoice price of £14,681. The quantity was reduced to 8,085 pieces costing £5,549 in 1668-9, rising eventually to 20,336 pieces next year and valued at £10,253. A remarkable increase in the export of piece-goods is to be found in the export list of 1670-1 when 37,739 pieces were despatched to England at the cost price of £23,577. The next year both the quantity

<sup>1</sup> O.C., no. 7211, 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> D.B., 3 Feb. 1720, 100, f. 222.

<sup>3</sup> See Table 3.

The Company realized a profit of about 450 per cent from the sale of the piece-goods brought by the ship Tavistock in 1704-5. A.C.D. Perry W. 10.000 from the sale of the piece-goods brought by the ship Tavistock in 1704-5, A.G.D., Range II, 49, ff. 23,55.

<sup>6</sup> D.B., 29 Nov. 1670, 87, f. 404.

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and value were almost doubled, the number of piece-goods exported being 75,975 costing £41,739. It seems that from then onward the quantities and total value of textiles exported by the Company remained almost steady till the beginning of the 1680s. In the two years 1675-6 and 1676-7 81,779 pieces were annually exported on an average at the value of £40,698. In 1678-9 the Company exported 75,408 pieces valued at £50,363. But the tremendous growth in the total quantity of piece-goods as well as their value began in the 1680s which continued, though with interruption caused by various factors, throughout the period under review. The following table illustrates the continuous growth of textile trade from Bengal.

## Quinquennial Table of Textile Export from Bengal1

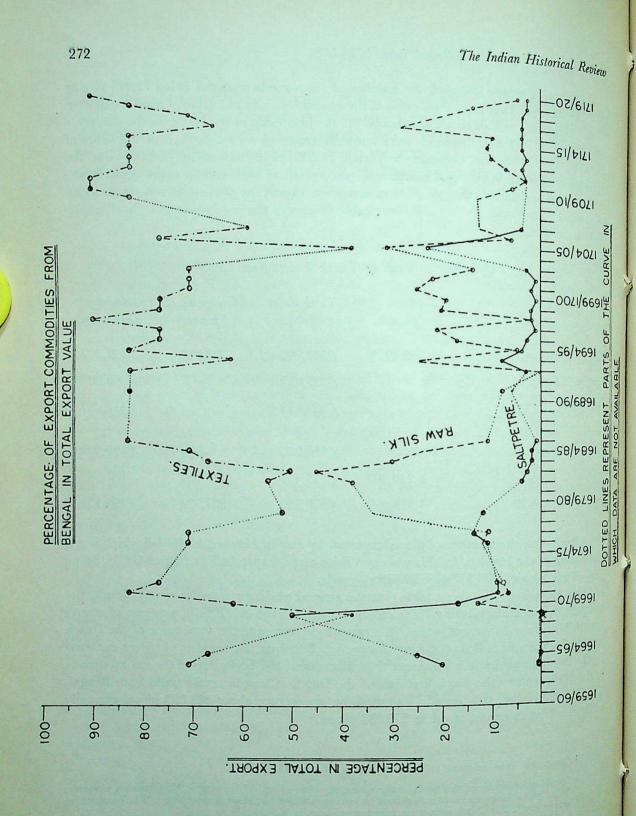
Years	Total no. of pieces	Total Value	Average no. of pieces	Average Total value
1681-2 — 1685-6	1,040,491*	£561,988	208,098	£112,397
1694-5 — 1698-9		£333,035		£ 66,607
1699-1700 — 1704-5 (Excluding 1703-4)	-	£569,435		£113,887
1705-6 — 1709-10		£450,043		£ 90,005
1710-1 — 1714-5	1,246,907	£914,446	249,381	£182,889
1715-6 — 1719-20	1,538,972	£970,759	307,794	£194,152

\*Excluding the number of pieces exported by *Persian Merchant* in 1685-6 which is not mentioned in the invoice. In this year two ships were despatched to England. The other ship, *Eagle*, carried 203,372 pieces of piece-goods.

It is clear from the above table that the general tendency in textile export, despite the two periods of slump during 1694-5 to 1698-9 and 1705-6 to 1709-10, was one of steady growth both in volume and value. We cannot yet compute the total value of the Dutch export of textiles from Bengal during this period. But from the number of pieces exported by the two companies it is apparent that from about the beginning of the second decade of the 18th century the English surpassed the Dutch at least in textile trade from Bengal. The Dutch during this decade exported on an average about 203,853 pieces annually while the English export stood at 278,588 pieces.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Computed from relevant volumes in A.G.D., Range II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Speaking generally of the textile trade about the close of the 17th century, K. Glamann observes: "The Dutch Company still maintained its leading position but it was a near thing. The competition was severe". For Dutch export see relevant volumes in K.A.



Finally, it is interesting to see what percentage the total value of annual textile export constituted of the total value of the English Company's annual export from Bengal. With the exception of a few years (for example, in 1668-9 and 1704-5 when the percentage slid to 38.5) the total value of annual textile export formed roughly about 70 to 90 per cent of the total value of the Company's exports. So it can rightly be asserted that throughout the second half of the 17th century and the first two decades of the 18th century textiles constituted the most important article in the structure of the English Company's export trade from Bengal.

### V

The European companies procured textiles for export mainly through merchantmiddlemen as they could not deal directly with the producers in most cases. They had to give dadni or advance to middlemen who in their turn paid advance to weavers and artisans in the proper time of the year. Thus one finds that the dadni system was widely in use and that both cash advances and giving out of raw materials were established practices. Textile production in Bengal, as in other parts of India, was organized as a cottage industry by the weavers and artisans in their own homes. These people with little capital in their hands generally had to depend largely on the advance either in cash or in kind from the merchantmiddlemen for whom they produced the commodities. Thus the merchant-middlemen had some control over the quality, size and quantity of production. But as yet there was no full-fledged putting-out system involving deep penetration of capital into production. The merchant giving out advances was only interested in the finished products and thus remained largely outside the production organization. And despite the increased demand for textiles and competition among buyers, both European and Asian, it seems that the weavers and artisans had hardly any bargaining power which remained mostly in the hands of these merchant-middlemen.

The activities of the European companies undoubtedly gave an impetus to textile production in Bengal. The European demand for Bengal textiles was a new phenomenon in the history of the country's export trade and assuming, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that the supply for European markets did not seriously affect Bengal's traditional exports to other regions, it can rightly be said that the production of textiles had definitely gone up during this period, though it is not possible to measure this in any quantitative terms. A cursory glance, however, at the export list of the European companies will give a rough idea of the extent of expansion of textile trade. Towards the close of the period under study the English and the Dutch companies exported annually from Bengal on an average about 525,000 pieces of different textiles. Only an expansion in production could meet such a huge demand for Bengal textiles. The significant point is that the increase in production could be made without any fundamental change in the technique or in the organizational aspect of the production system. The question naturally

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<sup>1</sup> See Table 2.

crops up—how then was this expansion in production possible? In the absence of any direct evidence only a tentative hypothesis can be put forward. So far as the textile industry was concerned, the expansion in production was achieved by picking up the slack in the economy. The fact that a considerable increase in the total output could be brought about without any significant innovation in the technique of production obviously points to the existence of a possible over-capacity in the textile industry over short period or the creation of new supplies of skilled labour which was the most important factor in the production system. This is further confirmed by the fact that when the English settled down in Kasimbazar, there was such a huge congregation of weavers there that it resulted in the lowering of prices of cloth. It is probable that these weavers were not fully employed earlier and also that quite a few of them were previously agricultural producers, taking to weaving only as a subsidiary employment and now becoming exclusively weavers giving up agriculture as their primary occupation.

It appears that despite the promise of "great wages" and all material inducement the weavers in Bengal were somewhat reluctant to leave their traditional abodes and settle down in some other places and the English Company failed to persuade Bengali weavers to go and settle down in Madras. This is rather interesting in view of the fact that the Coromandel weavers were "surprisingly mobile". "Such was their caste and lineage" that Bengali weavers feared to lose these by crossing salt water. The Company even failed to persuade the taffeta-weavers to move from Kasimbazar and settle in Hugli. But Bengali weavers and artisans never lacked enterprise. The English factors reported that the weavers were willing to engage in any new work though they demanded higher price for any cloth other than those made traditionally. On various occasions they demanded payment of the cost of alteration in their looms for meeting the specified requirements of piece-goods by the Company.

The activities of the European companies were responsible for introducing certain new elements in the organization of commerce and production, though not on any extensive scale. But they might hardly be called innovations, as their overall impact was not particularly significant. Before the arrival of the European companies the Asian as well as the Portuguese merchants used to buy from the markets or manufacturers as best articles as they could get at any given time. But the European companies of monopolistic merchant capital, catering to the European craze for "Indienness" and trading for a higher margin of profit, insisted on supplies conforming to samples with rigid and specific demands as to size, colour and quality and thus introduced the idea of specific standardization which was something new in the region. But the point may not be stretched too far because while on the one hand the local artisans' production system was rather indifferent to any rigid standardization, the severe competition amongst too many buyers in the market on the other was likely to make the merchants and producers somewhat reluctant to specific standardization as they were sure of being able to sell off their wares to one buyer or the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Irwin, op. cit., pp. 31-2.

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other. Before the arrival of the European companies the Asian and the Portuguese merchants never fixed a definite price of the commodities they ordered at the time of giving out advances and did so only when the products were delivered to them. The European companies, however, fixed the price according to samples at the time of giving out the dadni and this was a novelty in the organization of commerce in the region. They also sometimes set up establishments for the processing of cloth—especially bleaching and dyeing as also for winding or reeling of silk—employed weavers and artisans purely as wage-workers and even brought throwsters, weavers and painters from Europe who instructed local artisans and weavers in those arts and tried to improve the quality and colour of the piece-goods or raw silk. These establishments no doubt enlarged the range of the manufacturing system in the region, though they were not entirely new institutions in the country. The royal karkhanas were there and though they produced for use rather than for market, they must have served as models for the merchants to engage in such enterprises. There is evidence that such establishments under Indian auspices were operating in the 17th century, though perhaps on a small scale. As early as 1620 the visiting English factors at Patna intended to start a "Corconna" with about a hundred workmen to wind silk,1 obviously following the practice of the local merchants. It is very probable that Bernier referred to such private "manufactories" when he observed that "rich merchants and tradesmen...pay the workmen rather higher wages".2 Luillier who visited Bengal in 1702-3 remarked that the big native merchants "apart from their large numbers of agents...maintain a great number of workers whom they make to work for very little".3 So it seems that small private manufactories under Indian auspices were already there and perhaps the European activities only extended the range of such establishments.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> EFI, 1618-21, pp. 197-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> F. Bernier, Travels in the Mughal Empire, 1656-68, tr., A. Constable, 2nd edn, revised by V.A. Smith (London, 1916), pp. 228-9.

Quoted in Indrani Ray, "The French Company and the Merchants of Bengal (1680-1730)", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, viii, no.1 (March 1971), 50.

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	TABLE	
YEARS	QUANTITY	(pieces) VALUE IN £
1663-4	26,383	그 가지 하면 하다면 이 상이 되었다. 그 작은 경이 있는 사람들은 사람들이 되었다면 없다면 없다.
1664-5	21,133	16,951
1668-9	8,085	12,412
1669-70	20,336	5,549
1670-1	37,739	10,254
1671-2	75,957	23,578
1675-6	84,402	41,739
1676-7	79,157	38,204
1678-9	75,408	43,193
1681-2	164,479	50,363
1682-3	168,789	80,640
1683-4	187,004	78,641
1684-5	316,829	96,416 148,813
1685-6		
1690-1	71,130	157,480
1692-3	17,987	34,538
1693-4	89,052	9,339
1694-5	71,539	36,858
1695-6	71,333	26,308
1696-7	125,747	70,490
1697-8	125,777	56,617
1698-9		60,258
1699-1700		119,364
1700-1		144,441
1701-2		196,950 165,522
1701-2		37,314
1704-5		25,211
1705-6	38,250	54,640
	81,224	49,876
1706-7		103,256
1707-8		75,848
1708-9	070.000	166,423
1709-10	272,222	203,196
1710-1	284,907	210,824
1711-2	298,624	219,093
1712-3	275,553	149,048
1713-4	197,503	132,287
1714-5	190,320	178,015
1715-6	271,126	115,366
1716-7	179,097	174,606
1717-8	275,375	205,275
1718-9	337,642	205,275
1719-20	475,750	297,300
		50)

(Computed from A.G.D., Range II, 28, 30, 32, 37, 41, 43, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58)

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TABLE 2

### Percentage of Textiles in Total Export Value from Bengal

Years 1663-4 1664-5 1668-9 1669-70 1670-1 1671-2	Textil. 71 67 38 62 83 77
1664-5 1668-9 1669-70 1670-1 1671-2	71 67 38 62 83 77
1668-9 1669-70 1670-1 1671-2	38 62 83 77
1669-70 1670-1 1671-2	38 62 83 77
1670-1 1671-2	62 83 77
1671-2	83 77
	77
1675-6	
	71
1676-7	71
1678-9	52
1681-2	55
1682-3	50
1683-4	67
1684-5	71
1685-6	83
1690-1	83
1692-3	83
1693-4	62
1694-5	83
1695-6	77
1696-7	77
1697-8	91
1698-9	77
1699-1700	77
1700-1	71
1701-2	71
1702-3	71
1704-5	38
1705-6	77
1706-7	59
1709-10	83
1710-1	91
1711-2	91
1712-3	83
1713-4	83
1714-5	83
1715-6	83
1716-7	66
1717-8	71
1718-9	83
1719-20	91

(Source:-See note on Table 1)

TABLE 3

Contracts with Calcutta merchants showing the different varieties of three principal muslins and their prices for four years (cf. B.P.C., Range I, 2-4).

	Vd				1710 Rs. As.	1713	1716	1719
		Co.		Co.	As. As.	Rs. As.	Rs. As.	Rs. As.
G	Malda	40			0 10	0 10		
Cossaes	N. Committee of the com		×	21	9—12	9—12	912	9-12
"	Orrua	40	×	-	6—10	7—0	7—0	7-0
,,	Cogmary	40	×	2	9—8	9—8	9—8	9-8
"	"	40	×	3	13—0	13—0	13—0	13-0
,,	,,	40	×	-		_	10—8	10-8
,,	Colligaum	40	×	21/2	10—8	10—8		_
Mulmu	ls Malda	40	×	2	13—12	-		
,,	Savagepore	40	×		8—12		8—12	_
,,	Santapore	40	×	21	13—8	14—12	14—12	14-12)
					16—0	11—12	11—12	11-12}
							22-0	13-4
,,		40	×	3		20—0		16-0
,,	Dacca	40	×	2	16—0	13—0		8—0
,,	Dumree	40	×	21	12—0	_	_	
,,	Cossajura	40	×	2	13—6	12—0	12—0	12—0
,,	Coincola	40	×	2		11—12	_	
,,	flowered							
	with silk	40	×	1		22-0		
,,	flowered with							
	silk thread	40	×	1	16—0	15—0	15—0	15-0
Tanjeeb	s Santose	40	×	21	7—12	7—12		6-14
,,	Dacca	40	×	21	8—8			_
,,	,,	40	×	2	7—0	7—0	<u> </u>	7-0
	Flowered							
	with silk					20—0		20-0
	Flowered with					20—0		
,,	silk thread	40	×	1	13—0	13—0		13-0
	- mond	10	^		13_0	13-0		

## DUPLEIX'S PRIVATE TRADE IN CHANDERNAGORE

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European settlements in India such as Bombay in the west, Madras and Pondichéry on the Coromandel coast and Calcutta, Chinsurah and Chandernagore in Bengal had emerged as urban centres of varying importance by the middle of the 18th century. In spite of local differences all these new coastal and riverine towns possessed certain features in common. Each continued the Portuguese tradition of combining port, fort and factory. Each had its "international" crowd, its neat and well-planned "white" town quite clearly demarcated from its native or "black" counterpart. Above all all seemed to owe their prosperity (or the absence of it) primarily to their skill to develop themselves into centres of Asian trade. In other words, they would be considered flourishing only to the extent they attracted European and Asian merchants and allied groups participating in Asian trade—trade carried on along India's coast line, as also between the various regions of Asia, as distinct from the Europe-Asia trade.

The important position of Bengal in India's overseas trade made the French merchant inhabitants of Chandernagore naturally more concerned about the possibilities of this place as a commercial centre. Its proximity to Calcutta made comparisons practically inevitable and always a painful exercise for the French. It is, therefore, not surprising that in the 60 odd years that passed between the formal foundation of Chandernagore in 1690 and the destruction of the Fort d'Orleans in 1757 the period 1731-41 during which Dupleix revitalized the town through his commercial activities stands out as of special significance in the writings of French and English historians. 1 His role as well as the reported importance and prosperity of Chandernagore during his administration are to them a model of what might have been and Dupleix's stay in that town seems to have accumulated more legends than others of its kind. Castonnet des Fosses describes Chandernagore in the pre-Dupleix days as almost an isolated oasis, without life, stirred only by a caravan (he seems to be meaning it literally). A calmness "the very neighbour of death" reigned over the little European colony for the rest of the year and reminded one of Senegal with its barter trade.2 On the other hand in depicting the spectacular career of Dupleix local legends till a hundred years ago, in which fact and fancy were inextricably mixed up, conjured up the image of a mad genius.3 They are still

Abbreviations: A.N. : Archives Nationales, Paris. B.N. : Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

To name only a few of those who have not been mentioned elsewhere in the present paper:

(i) J.C. Marshman, "Notes on the Right Bank of the Hooghly", Calcutta Review, iv (1845), 508.

(ii) George Toynbee, A Sketch of the Administration of the Hooghly District (Calcutta, 1888), p. 15.

(iii) R. Glachant, L' Inde des Français (Paris, 1966).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Castonnet des Fosses, L' Inde Française avant Dupleix (Paris, 1887), p. 7.
<sup>3</sup> Baboo Bholanath Chunder, Travels of a Hindoo (London, 1869), p. 9.

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being believed and we are told of Dupleix's proceeding to Bengal in 1742, "there to be installed as a Nawab"... and how "the French Nawab and the Muhammedan Governor got in terms of great intimacy with much mutual respect". The legends obviously are too firmly rooted to be dislodged by even such scholarly works as the one by M. Alfred

Observations left by officials and captains of the French East India Company (FEIC) are more prosaic and accurate. M. le Chevalier d'Albert, captain of the Syrene belonging to the FEIC, arrived in Chandernagore in September 1725. During his stay he observed that Calcutta was the biggest, the most populous and the most beautiful of the three European towns on the Ganga. This was mainly due to the great activity of its port. That very year five ships had arrived there from Europe. There were, moreover, 30 to 40 big and small ships belonging to private traders and doing "country trade". While the English Company's Europe-bound trade amounted to about 25-30 lakhs of rupeesless than that of the Dutch-private trade from Calcutta amounted to about 20 lakhs. The richest merchants of the country were attracted to Calcutta as it enjoyed the unique privilege of not paying any customs duties. Albert's sketch of Chandernagore, a neat little town with a modest prosperity, helps to dispel the impression of gloom and misery generally ascribed to the place before 1731. But even his obvious chauvinism and sense of loyalty to the French cause do not make him go beyond the remark that "if Chandernagore keeps on growing at her present pace for another seven or eight years", she might compete with the English settlement. Significantly he hopes that Asian trade (the French called it trade from India to India) recently thrown open to employees of the FEIC in India could add to the activity and wealth of Chandernagore.3

This hope seems to have been more than fulfilled by the end of the next decade. On 23 August 1734 M.de la Garde Jazier, captain of the Jupiter, a ship of the FEIC which had anchored in Chandernagore about a week before, wrote home to a high official:

Chandernagore has become important only since Dupleix became its director. Most of his predecessors have done very little of private trade, either due to inability or fear. There is a great change here since the last three years... if the trade succeeds, this establishment will resemble that of the English.

Dupleix, in his opinion, combined in himself character, experience and reputation, qualities needed to avail of the great possibilities of Asian trade in Bengal.

Observations such as these, in spite of their incomplete and partial nature, help us build a credible image of Chandernagore shorn of all legends that either depict it as a moribund outpost in its pre-Dupleix days or overwhelm one by the wealth of colourful

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> M. Arokiaswami, "The French Towns in India", Journal of Indian History (Trivandrum, August 1965), pp. 589-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. Martineau, Dupleix et L'Inde Française, i (1722-1741) (Paris, 1929).

<sup>3 &</sup>quot;Voiage de M. le Chevalier d'Albert dans les Indes Orientales pendant 1724-1726" B.N. Fonds Français, 9090 f. 143. Henceforth Albert.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> La Garde Jazier, "Lettre en forme de journal..." A.N. Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 75 of 169, f. 170v. Henceforth Garde Jazier.

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details concerning Dupleix's extraordinary successes. Whatever they tell us about the promises of Asian trade is also significant, although for a different reason. There we find summed up most of the basic assumptions about Bengal's Asian trade in the early decades of the 18th century which are worth testing. Such brief statements obviously do not reveal all the confusion, contradiction and absence of precision which generally characterize any discussion about the rather complex affair, known as "country" or Asian trade, as it was then operated from Bengal.

The aim of the present paper is to examine some aspects of this trade as revealed through the commercial activities of Dupleix as a private trader during his stay of a little more than 10 years in Chandernagore. Dupleix had not succeeded in attracting 70 ships a year to its port, nor had he embellished it with 10,000 houses and/or 100,000 inhabitants, as claimed by some of his more enthusiastic biographers. 1 But there is no doubt that during his administration this quiet little settlement did leap into prominence, mainly through the impetus he had given to private participation in Asian trade. Of all those who have dealt in some detail with his life only Prosper Cultru and Alfred Martineau have paid serious attention to this significant phase.2 Even so their main preoccupation is to examine only those aspects of his life there which had a bearing on his subsequent career. Did he, for example, form his famous political project during his stay in Bengal? Did he amass an enormous fortune which helped him later to realize his project? Martineau says frankly that he considers it useless to load the story with all the details about his trading activities. "Nothing is more dull or monotonous than the description of the fitting out of a ship", he adds.3 Nevertheless it is to these two authors that we owe the information that the primary concern of Dupleix in this phase was commercial, not political. Dupleix was discouraged at times by loneliness and by the unhealthy climate; "one dies here like flies, although it is well and good for making money", he wrote in a letter.4 He was also distracted at times by quarrels with the governor of Pondichery and by the tempting possibilities of being nominated as the governor there. But he is revealed mainly as a wilful and determined person, interested only in making a tidy sum which would enable him to return to France and to buy either a post or a title of nobility for himself—so typical of so many members of the French bourgeoisie of that epoch.

Based as it is on a llmited amount of unpublished and published primary sources and the two French biographies of Dupleix, the present study in no way claims to be a com-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> (i) G. Malleson, History of the French in India (Edinburgh, 1909), pp. 70-1.

<sup>(</sup>ii) T. Hamont, Dupleix (Paris, 1881), chapter I.

<sup>(</sup>iii) K.C. Kormocar, Chandernagor et Dupleix (Chandernagore, 1965), p. 188.

<sup>(</sup>iv) Even P. Cultru, while rejecting the exaggerated claims of others, himself tends to accept uncritically the description of Chandernagore with 100,000 inhabitants, referred to in an anonymous memoir. See his Dupleix: Ses plans politiques; Sa disgrace (Paris, 1901), p. 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The work of Kormocar, op. cit., based mainly on secondary works, is on the whole eulogistic and uncritical.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Martineau, op. cit., p. 302.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Dupleix to his brother, 30 Nov. 1731. B.N. Fonds Française 8979 f. 13 v. Henceforth B.N. Fr. 8979.

prehensive one. Only a rereading and reinterpretation of Dupleix's entire correspondence from Chandernagore might clarify certain obscurities which are bound to crop up in course of the discussion. Nevertheless it seems feasible to attempt a reconstruction of Dupleix's career in Chandernagore with the help of this material with a view to separating fact from legend and testing certain assumptions about the nature of private Asian trade

Besides the limitations of sources, we should also remember that Dupleix's activities or experience might not represent at all the hundreds (so it seems) of faceless "Mores and banians", Armenians and private European merchants/shipowners whose fortunes were also tied up with private Asian trade. As the administrative chief of a European factory town, Dupleix enjoyed a privileged position not shared by ordinary traders. This is referred to by both Cultru and Martineau, especially with regard to the facilities available to him for borrowing necessary capital.2 In Madras, in Calcutta and in fact in all the "colonial" towns of that epoch the governor and his council were, more often than not, the principal local "country" merchants.3 Even in Surat, a Mughal port, the chief of the English factory held sway over all private English merchants.4 These "chicfs" seemed to be continuing in the good old tradition of the Muslim nobility entering this trade and using all their prerogatives to obtain special privileges. Dupleix's achievements, therefore, might be reflecting the general phenomenon, though imperfectly.

Long before Dupleix's arrival on the scene employees of the FEIC in India had noted the crucial role of Asian trade in the fortunes of European trading settlements. Madras especially was a great example to the French at Pondichéry, who so often had to take their bullion to be sold at the former place to local merchant princes like Soucourama.5

Till 1722 the FEIC tried to engage in this trade on its own and excluded its employees from it. But by that time the directors had realized that they were incapable of looking after both the European and Asian wings of the Company's trade. The latter involved greater risk and drew away a part of their precious capital. It needed great experience,

<sup>2</sup> Cultru, op. cit., pp. 130-1; Martineau, op. cit., p. 299.

Letters written by Dupleix to various persons during his stay in Chandernagore constitute, in my knowledge, the most important source of information on his career during this period. Copies of these letters are preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale and the Bibliotheque d'Arsenal in Paris.

There are considerable grant the Bibliotheque of the propertion of There are considerable gaps in them. I have been able to utilize in this article only a portion of volume I of this correspondence dating from 25 Nov. 1731 to 18 Jan. 1733. References to letters written later than this date are mostly from the two biographies mentioned. Letters and memoirs of other merchants have been unfall. of other merchants have been useful in bridging some of the gaps.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For conditions of country trade in Madras see Dodwell, Nabobs of Madras (London, 1926), p. 126.

A memoir by Vincens, "Memoire General du Commerce que la Compagnie des Indes peut faire dans ses etablissements de l'Inde..." A.N. Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 197 f. 12v. Henceforth Vincens.

H. Furber, Bombay Presidency in the mid-18th Century (London, 1965), chapter II, passim. While in Pondichéry Dupleix was entrusted with such a mission in 1723, Martineau, op. cit., pp. 69-70 69-70.

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acquired through regular activities, to gauge market condition in such far-flung places as Manila, the Maldives or Bassora. The FEIC, which was a state-regulated concern rather than a venture of free merchants with determination and initiative, had never come up to this requirement. It seemed to have made up its mind by 1722 that preparing cargoes for the European market was the "essential object" of the Company's settlements in India. As a result from 1722 the French Company's employees in India were allowed to participate in the Asian trade, the Company investing only 10,000 pagodas annually in it.<sup>1</sup>

This is not to suggest that the Company's employees in Chandernagore had nothing to do with country trade before that date. Stray glimpses of their activities as well as of free or private merchants are discernible even in 1700. From whatever little is known of their transactions, rather modest sums seem to have been usually involved. (We also find practically no mention of Indian merchants; Sens, Dattas and Borals were some established families of bankers lending money to the Company, but nothing specific is known of their narticipation in this trade). To mention a few instances, in 1700 we find one Alexander Soulaz, a private merchant, selling to Dr Jacques Jouyes 170 pieces of cloth. In 1721 Coja Aratoon Lazare sold the Madone de salut, a ship of 200 tons, to M. Guy de la Bouexiere for Rs 11,000. That very year the same M. de la Bouexiere formed a society of trade with Sr. du Bois Rolland and the Greek Nicolas Demetrius. The two latter gentlemen were private merchants, residing in Chandernagore. Demetrius was to contribute twothirds of the stipulated capital of Rs 90,000. This included his ship Jerusalem valued at Rs 33,000.2 Such details bring out, however modestly, the "international" character of the merchant community in Chandernagore. which was no doubt true of other port towns of India as well.

These scattered pieces of information would suggest that Chandernagore did not play any important role in Asian trade down to the 1720s. The town, however, had grown from its original nucleus of 61 bighas of land, bought in the village Boroquichempur by M. Deslandes. It now included two villages, Boroquichempur and Chak Nasirabad, acquired over the years in bits and pieces from the local zamindars under the names of obliging Bengali associates such as Jagannath Prasad Chaudhuri and Rajaram Chaudhuri. Dupleix himself would soon secure a third, Gondolpara, from its owner Hussain Chellaby, a renowned merchant of Surat.<sup>3</sup> Chevalier d'Albert noted the comfortable and well-built houses of the European quarter; most of its streets, "perfectly straight", were arranged in neat rows and planted with lovely trees; apartments in the fort were large and comfortable. As mentioned before, his description leaves the impression of a fairly big town. The inhabitants consisted of 18 thousand to 20 thousand Hindus of 52 castes, with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Martineau, op. cit., p. 37. However, due to the general "impoverishment" of the employees the FEIC often had to come to their rescue in this trade, Cultru, op. cit., p. 129; Vincens, ff. IV-2r.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> C.C. Roy, "Le Commerce Particulier des Français au Bengal", Revue Historique de l'Inde Française (1919), passim.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Memoire sur les etablissements en Asie de la Compagnie (1537-1822) par Darrac, chef de la loge de Dacca, 1822", A.N. Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 115 ff. 192-5v. Martineau, op. cit., p. 236.

their "ugly temples" and 500 Europeans, while Armenians, Muslims and the "Topas" or "Metis" accounted for another 400. There was a Jesuit church and one of the Capucines for the 1,400-1,500 Christians, including slaves. Local festivals like the Durgapuja and the eclipse of moon animated the entire settlement. Albert himself was a spectator, his curiosity ill-concealed beneath a veneer of apparent repulsion to such "lugubrious" customs. During his stay, moreover, the king of Achin sent an envoy to Chandernagore offering the French very favourable terms of trade. Life in the white town, however, was not gay (in spite of the three marriage ceremonies where he played the violin). The rain was continuous and there was too much bickering among the wives of the employees of the FEIC. A quiet and monotonous life on the whole, but no sign of decline.1

It was to this town that Dupleix, the young director of 34, arrived on 28 August 1731 and immediately got involved in more than one commercial venture. Less than a month after his arrival he informed Lenoir, the governor of Pondichéry, that besides preparing that year's cargoes for the Company's Europe-bound ships he was organizing one trip to Achin, one to Surat and one to the Maldives. The Fortune was to go to the Malabar coast to bring back pepper.2 He had in fact founded a new society to carry on the Asian ventures on a larger scale and was on the look-out for new ships. Trips such as these including all that they involved remained his primary concern for the rest of his stay. He took care in preparing the home-bound cargoes, but there he was really an agent carrying out orders, limited by specific instructions and the amount of funds put at his disposal by his masters.

II

The pattern of movement of ships sent out by Dupleix and his associates during 1731-41 brings out clearly the predominantly east-west orientation of India's Asian trade in this period, described by Professor Holden Furber.3 It is not possible to determine the exact number of trips organized by Dupleix, but it can be said that he organized or participated in at least 90 voyages during these years. Most of the ships sailed from Chandernagore. Some of them were also fitted out in Calcutta and Pondichéry. Of these 79 had gone to the west, for example to Pondichéry, to the Malabar coast and Surat, to Mocha and Jedda in the Red Sea and to Bandar Abbas and Bassora in the Persian Gulf. These also included those sent to the Maldives and to Mozambique. Sixteen ships visited Pondichéry from Chandernagore, but many of them seem to have been running regular errands between the Chef-lieu and Chandernagore rather than doing full-scale trade. Even if we leave them out, the balance tilts heavily to the west. There the pride of place

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Albert, ff. 145-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Dupleix to Lenoir, 25 Sept. 1731. B.N. Fr. 8979 f. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> These and the following pieces of information are based on Martineau, op. cit., chapter VIII and Appendix III. There are certain discrete tentaire. Appendix III. There are certain discrepancies between the two. So the conclusions are tentative. See also L. Dermigny, Le Conimerca à Canton au VIIII et a 1984 in 1984 in 1984. Sec also L. Dermigny, Le Commerce à Canton au XVIII Siecle 1719-1833 (Paris, 1964), ii, 779-80.

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is shared almost equally between Surat (16 ships) and Bassora (14 ships). The Bengal-Surat axis in fact was considered by associates and friends of Dupleix as the most profitable.¹ Surat absorbed entire cargoloads of Bengal sugar and textile goods as well as pepper and other goods picked up by the Surat-bound ships from the Malabar coast. Surat was, moreover, equally important as a point of transhipment for vessels going to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Garde Jazier reveals involuntarily one aspect of the complications involved in private trade when he mentions how piece-goods rejected by the Company's agents for the Europe-bound cargoes would suffice for private trade of the "banians" and adds "It is quite usual to see ships leaving for Persia and Jedda with cargoes worth 2 to 3 lakh piastres, which amount to a considerable freight".² When we remember that this freight trade was the mainstay of most European owned ships doing private trade between Bengal and the places referred to, we get a glimpse of the conflict of interest between official trade of the Company and private trade of its employees. Goods might very well be rejected apparently because they did not meet the specification but actually to help the bania and the private shipowner.

It is also interesting to note that despite all the difficulties faced in the Maldives trade and the discouraging remarks of experienced participants like Vincens and Février, the French private traders always showed keen interest in continuing and developing the cowrie trade with these islands. This can be accounted for probably by the growing demand for these shells, one of the principal means of exchange for buying slaves in Africa. French competition in this sphere affected the English in Bengal. At least 10 French ships had gone from Bengal to the Maldives during the decade concerned.<sup>3</sup>

Trade with the cast was obviously less advantageous. Only 12 of the 90 odd trips mentioned before went eastwards—six to Manila, two to Canton, two to Achin and one each to Pegu and Malacca. Dutch control over the spice producing areas had greatly reduced the scope of the once flourishing trade which exchanged Coromandel cloth for spices. Armenians and Muslims were some of the traditional rivals in trade with Achin, Pegu and Manila. The growing English competition also accounted for reduction in profits, so often regretted by French traders.

While sketching the "pre-commercial revolution" structure of India's Asian trade with the east, Professor Furber has not mentioned trade between India and Manila.<sup>5</sup> This, however, seemed quite an attractive proposition to the French and English in Bengal. Armenians of Madras had almost always taken part in this trade. Pondichéry had followed the example from the early 1720s, although without much success. As Guillaume Février

<sup>1 (</sup>i) Vincens, f. 9v.

<sup>(</sup>ii) Février, A.N. Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 56 ff. 71-2. Henceforth Février.

<sup>(</sup>iii) Garde Jazier, f. 171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Garde Jazier, f. 171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 515-29.

Dupleix does not seem to have had any share in the Canton trip of 1738-9. Martineau, op. cit., pp. 524,527.

Furber, John Company at Work, p. 162.

remarked in 1738, the general impoverishment of the French Company's employees in the two port towns prevented them from making any headway in this lucrative trade. It consisted of selling the goods in vogue in Mexico to the Galleon before its departure from Manila. The return cargo of piastres and cowries always sold well, the first in Coromandel and the second in Bengal.1

Dupleix, in his own determined way, started sending ships to Manila from Bengal from 1732. Between 1735 and 1740 five ships were fitted out by him and his associates for this purpose. He tried to secure capital and services from Louis de Médére of Madras and Alexander Carvalho of Calcutta as well as from Stackhouse, the governor of Calcutta, but finally the Entreprenant sailed without any assistance from these persons. He managed to secure a lot of freight, mainly from the Armenians and Muslims, by his promises to secure better terms for them from the Spanish governor of the Philippines; once he even wheedled away a sizable number of Armenian freighters from going over to the English by pointing out the dangers involved in sending their goods on Protestant ships. The trip of 1735-6 is said to have produced 65 per cent profit. The next year's trip was organized in Pondichéry where Dupleix invested Rs 6,000. It was also a great success, mainly due to the absence of some regular Chinese sampans that year in Manila. The three governors of Calcutta, Pondichéry and Chandernagore ignored this detail and were very much interested in organizing separate trips to Manila. It was then that Dupleix foiled the project of Stackhouse by winning over the Armenian freighters, always crucial to the Manila trade. Dupleix, however, had not reckoned with his own captain and supercargo, Dugard and Dominique Carvalho, who unloaded a portion of this freight from the Balocopal (good fortune) to make place for their own goods; the freighters finally had to secure the services of an English ship.2 These details bring out another aspect of private Asian trade, the significant position of the captains and supercargoes vis-à-vis the freighters and other participants. As we shall see later, Dupleix himself was quite aware of this. Trips to Manila were generally profitable, unless there were too many competitors or there was a sudden change of fashion in Mexico. Février himself was once the victim of such a situation.3 One way of meeting the difficulties and expenses involved in wintering in Manila was 10 link this trip with one to China. This has been suggested by more than one merchant.4

Dupleix's interest in opening up regular trade links with China provides another proof of his single-mindedness and tendency to ignore all suggestions of difficulties. His optimism and concern about the possibilities of the China trade are revealed quite well in a number of letters written by him to Vincens, his close friend and associate in Pondichéry. He tried to persuade Vincens to come over and settle in Chandernagore as the latter could never make money from his job of a councillor of the French Company or from participating

<sup>1</sup> Vincens, ff. IV 2 r. Février, f. 62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> On Manila trade of Dupleix: B.N. Fr. 8979, f. 27v, f. 29v, f. 30, f. 31, f. 40; Martineau, op. cit., pp. 342-5: Vincers f. 2r. pp. 342-5: Vincens, f. 2r.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Février, f. 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Vincens, f. 2r; Février, f. 62.

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ried ever ting in Asian trade. Dupleix actually offered him to act as supercargo in his proposed trip to China via Surat. He was quite frank and definite in reminding Vincens that the lion's share of the profit in Asian trade went to the captain and supercargo. Dupleix was sure that Vincens would easily make a profit of Rs 20 thousand to 30 thousand from this venture. In the same letter of 23 May 1733 Dupleix tried to argue Vincens out of his misgivings by pointing out that since gold was not the main item in return cargoes from China to Bengal, fluctuation in its prices would affect Bengal much less than the Coromandel coast. The latter with its gold currency was much more sensitive to these fluctuations. Bengal could absorb a wider variety of goods and also profit from the China-Surat-Bengal trade linkage. Hence prospects of Bengal's trade with China were definitely bright. It is a pity that Dupleix does not spell out all his reasons for considering China trade such a profitable one.

Pegu was always considered useful by the French because of its supply of teak and the facilities of building and repairing ships there. Dupleix had tried trading there once in March 1732 in his newly bought ship Fidele, renamed Francois. It left with a cargo of Rs 16 thousand to 17 thousand and was expected to bring back wood of all sorts and, funds permitting, copper and wax. The results were quite disappointing, mainly because of the intrigues of the supercargoes and Dubois, a French resident in Pegu. After informing Vincens of how he himself had been duped by all these persons Dupleix sums up: "You know my sentiments regarding these people. Beware of them as pestilence".2

These pieces of information are not helpful in determining general trends in Asian trade. But it seems safe to assume two or three things. Dupleix had experienced keen competition in all the important commercial centres. The English, Armenians and Muslims were important groups of participants; the role of the Dutch is not at all clear. A high margin of profit was not normal, but steady profits were more or less assured in, say, Surac, Maldives or Manila. Frequent shipwrecks caused more harm to Dupleix's fortunes than unexpected concentration of competitors at anyone of the markets. The loss of the Aimable in 1735 while returning from Jedda with Rs 500,000 in gold was something from which Dupleix never quite recovered.<sup>3</sup> In 1739 the Balocopal disappeared in the Bay of Bengal after having done good business in Manila; Dupleix lost more than Rs 40,000 in it.<sup>4</sup> During the earlier years at least supercargoes and local agents often proved to be more than a match for Dupleix. Here, as in other cases, his English counterparts on the western coast fared better, where, we are told, "the power of a Company governor could make or break a country captain".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On China B.N. Fr. 8979 ff. 38v-39, f. 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. f. 33, f. 45; Martineau, op. cit., pp. 516-7.

Martineau, op. cit., p. 312; Cultru, op. cit., p. 149.

Martineau, op. cit., p. 345. Cultru (op. cit., p. 170) calculates his loss on the *Balocopal* at not less than Rs 100,000. This seems improbable.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Furber, Bombay Presidency in the mid-18th Century, p. 30.

#### III

In Bengal, as on the Coromandel coast, private trade of the kind carried on by Dupleix was generally conducted by individuals, associated temporarily for one or more trips, each investing a specific share of capital. Such "societies in participation", as the French called them, would also accept a considerable amount of freight and money on respondentia. Freight charges in Bengal varied from seven to 10 per cent and the sum "a la grosse aventure" or respondentia paid at least 18 per cent interest. One achievement of Dupleix was to secure, besides a large amount of freight, the involvement of a large number of participants. No complete account of the nature of participation of different associates can be drawn up from the documents referred to; so it is not easy to ascertain the importance of groups or individuals allied with him. But certain features do emerge as one glances through the available names and references.

We already know about the "international" character of the crowd at the port towns whose fortunes were tied up with Asian trade. Garde Jazier sums it up neatly when he says: ...the Ganges is the source and centre of India's trade. Here one sees the assembly of nations of Europe and Asia who differ so strongly in their spirit, their manners and customs, agreeing perfectly with one another or falling apart according to their interest, this being their sole guide.2

Dupleix's societies also reflect this "community of interest"; Dupleix was in fact seriously criticized once by the council of Pondichéry for the almost exclusively "foreign" character of his ventures; the employees of Chandernagore were said to have practically no stake in them. 3 But the insistence on this "international" character should not make us forget that within its loose framework there was often clear tension between certain sub-groups. However, both alliances and rivalries often cut across nationalities. The councils of Chandernagore and Pondichéry often came up against free merchants. Owing to his personal dislike of Lenoir, the governor of Pondichéry, and his followers, Dupleix often seems more bent upon drawing away the trade of that town than that of the English in Calcutta. He expresses himself quite frankly on this point in a number of letters written during the earlier months of 1732. He had bought five ships by that time and hoped to leave Pondichéry with only one ship. On 31 August 1732 he wrote to Trémisot, "Its (the Pondichéry council's) business will now only consist of writing impertinent letters to us. They are in despair over our trade which gives the hell to quite a few persons".4 Finally, very little is so far known about his Indian friends.

The list of Dupleix's associates includes the two successive governors of Pondichéry, Lenoir and Dumas. The first he served, understandably, with bad grace. In 1732, for example, he invested Rs 1,000 in a trip to Achin organized in Pondichéry with Lenoir at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Garde Jazier, f. 169; Dermigny, op. cit., p. 775; N.K. Sinha, The Economic History of Bengal, i, 77-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Martineau, op. cit., p. 333.

<sup>4</sup> B.N. Fr. 8979 f. 50v.

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its head. He did this only to please Vincens and said he would never repeat this. But he and Dumas, the next governor, took part in many trips and he often sold in Bengal goods assigned to him by the latter. Some councillors of Pondichéry and Chandernagore as well as agents of the various French factories in and outside Bengal were his trusted colleagues. Vincens and Pilavoine in Pondichéry and Trémisot in Mahe were quite close to him. Fouquet in Masulipatam, Martin in Surat, Groiselle in Patna and Burat in Kasimbazar were all included in his projects.2 Martin's help was especially valuable in buying new ships. Groiselle helped him in buying and selling goods at the Patna market. The Patna factory, it is often alleged, was opened in 1734 mainly to provide Dupleix with a foothold in the internal trade structure of the country. Apparently Groiselle himself was doing quite well.3 There were also the chiefs and other employees of the English and Dutch East India companies in Calcutta and Chinsurah. Sichterman the Dutch, Schonamille of the Ostend Co. and Stackhouse of Calcutta often joined him or lent him money. In 1736 Sichterman alone invested Rs 87,000 on the François going to Bassora. These alliances withstood all the tensions involved in securing sizable freights to various destinations, as in the case of the trip to Manila. Dupleix also had among his associates English merchants of Calcutta and Madras such as Eliot, W. Price, Benet, lackson Court and Wycht. One typical instance would be the capital investment pattern of the, Balocopal going to Manila in 1738. Out of a total of Rs 243,000 Rs 105,000 was from Eliot, Rs 30,000 from Dumas, Rs 40,000 from one of the Carvalho brothers, Rs 23,500 from Castanier, one of the directors of the French Company. Dupleix's share amounted to Rs 30,000 only. 4 Castanier was a regular participant. In 1736-7 he sent 10,000 pagodas or about Rs 25,000 to Dupleix to be invested in this trade. At the end of 1741 Dupleix's funds in Pondichéry and Chandernagore totalled about Rs 550,000.5 Bacquencourt, Dupleix's brother, would also assign fairly large sums to be invested in Asian trade by him.

Our knowledge of Dupleix's non-European and Indian associates is quite meagre. The Carvalho brothers of Madras and Calcutta as well as Louis de Médéra, a "creole" of Madras, often served him as his supercargoes and agents. The Armenians Coja Elias, Coja Cachik (whom he prided on having up his sleeve) and Coja Sautour Azamat joined him on his Manila ventures or lent him money. The great Ezechiel Rahabi of Cochin could be trusted to keep Dupleix's private ships such as the Aimable returning from Surat in 1733, well-supplied with pepper. In Bengal he certainly borrowed from Fatehchand Jagatseth. 7. Sujah-ud-din, the Nawab of Bengal whom Dupleix disliked heartily, is reported

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. f. 41v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. passim.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 319, 376-95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 344, 520; Cultru, op. cit., p. 146. Details about the rest of the investment are not mentioned by Martineau.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> At the rate of exchange of 2.50 livres=re 1; Dermigny, op. cit., p. 775.

<sup>6</sup> B.N. Fr. 8979 f. 18, f. 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Cultru, op. cit., p. 146.

to have been pestering him from 1732 with goods on his personal account, to be disposed of with advantage. In 1734 the consignment was worth 20,000 piastres; moreover, the articles were clearly overpriced; naturally Dupleix found himself in a very "delicate" situation, as our reporter puts it. His relation with neither Fatehchand Jagatseth nor Shuja-ud-din can be termed cordial. Indranarayan Chaudhuri, the legendary "Diwan" of Chandernagore, is said to have regularly participated in this trade, although hardly anything is known about his activities in this sphere. He seems to be the only native inhabitant who was trusted by Dupleix. He must have been a willing and competent collaborator in many of the director's private ventures to have earned this rather dubious distinction.2

Dupleix permitted French private merchants residing in Chandernagore to use the French flag on their personal ships on condition that they would not touch those ports where the Company had a factory. The implication of this condition is not quite clear. The Indian merchants were not granted this privilege, but were sometimes allowed to use the Company's dastaks on payment of a certain charge called "Koyali" or measurage.3

Following the groups of persons who came in contact with Dupleix, one can observe a clear hierarchy of his associates. The actual partners in his enterprise consisted mainly of well-placed and obliging employees of the various European companies who were persuaded to have a share in his ventures, either as associates in a society or simply lenders. In return Dupleix was always ready to offer them advantageous terms and privileges. This select circle was closely followed by the European and "mixed" elements who lent him their services as supercargoes and captains. Dupleix utilized many others as occasional lenders; a considerable number of local people proved useful as freighters, without whom most of his ventures would not succeed. Dupleix is said to have made good use of his position in securing favourable terms for borrowing and for freights and for services of a shady nature. As director, one of his main prerogatives would obviously be doing and organizing private trade in the name of the Company and thus avoiding the payment of large sums as customs duties payable by all private merchants. As he pointed out once, "the Director is and should be at the head of all ventures of the colony" to avoid being mixed up in any trouble with local authorities.4 It is not clear, however, whether all ships fitted out at Chandernagore for private trade came under its purview or only those organized by the employees of the French Company. Two French merchants, whose status is not clear from the documents, were once scolded by Dupleix for having allied themselves with Muslim and Armenian

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Garde Jazier, f. 170v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> On Indranarayan Chaudhuri see

R.C. Mitra, "Chandannagarer Indranarayan Chaudhuri" in Itihas, x, nos. 3-4, 1366-7 B.S., 83-03 (i) 83-93.

<sup>(</sup>ii)

Kormocar, op. cit., pp. 188-92. He was also an accomplice of the successors of Dupleix in Chandernagore, see A.N. Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 34 ff. 149-63, passim.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Correspondance du Conseil Supérieur avec le Conseil de Chandernagor, ii (1738-1747) (Pondichéry, 1916), 390. Henceforth. Corr P-C.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 392.

merchants instead of assigning their goods to a cargo prepared by the Chandernagore council. But they seem to have been employees. For in another case Brignon, a private merchant, was defended by Dupleix for having traded under French flag, "as he has always done".2 It seems safe to assume that while those under the jurisdiction of Chandernagore were obliged to engage in trade through the director and the council, the private merchants had to be submissive to the director to secure the permission of trading under the French flag. In both cases the aim was to rob the government of Bengal of its customs duties. The director could always control free merchants by conditional use of his discretion to lea them fly the Company's flag. The same Brignon was harassed by Burat, Dupleix's successor. as the latter's commercial interests were in conflict with those of the former. The Muslim shipowners were obviously considered undesirable rivals as they were never granted this privilege. Some prominent Armenians had fared better, probably because of their command over capital; collusive contracts in supplying goods and sending goods on freight were perhaps the only means of enrichment left to most of the petty local traders—Hindus. Muslims and Armenians. Privileged participation in private trade by the nobility does not seem to have affected Dupleix very much in spite of the trouble caused by the Nawab of Bengal,

In another sphere, in the Persian Gulf area, Dupleix had built up a special position for himself and the Chandernagore council. While Pondichéry did little trade in that area, Chandernagore had developed a regular and profitable trade link with Bassora. Enjoying a free field there, Dupleix controlled the entire French private trade from India to Bassora, naming the supercargoes himself and even putting obstacles to such private merchants from Pondichéry as might compete in this trade. The Company's decision to establish a regular consulate there in 1736 brought these things to light. Dupleix opposed the idea as it was going to mean the end of his unchallenged control; his arguments, of course, were different. Pondichéry in its turn pointed out how the Chandernagore council was trying to keep out all competition in Bassora through unfair means. This is one more example of private interest of the employees coming into direct conflict with that of the Company.

We really have to know much more in order to understand the motivation of all who flocked to a European port like Chandernagore. The facility of evading customs duties was no doubt one great temptation and seems to have outweighed all the coercion faced by the subordinate participants; it often appears practically as the main hinge upon which rested the career of ports like Chandernagore and to a much greater extent Calcutta. There were also other obvious advantages such as the protection offered by the fort and a port which was functioning smoothly and had arrangements for repairing and furnishing ships.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 273.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A memoir by Brignon entitled Reflexion Sur le Commerce d' Inde en Inde (175) Colonies C<sup>2</sup> 37, 54-61 refers to these difficulties.

<sup>4</sup> Corr P-C, p. 128.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 330-2.

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Dupleix took particular care to maintain a number of properly stocked naval stores. One should not, however, have any illusion about the supposedly more "benevolent" nature of administration in these European settlements. In Madras, in Pondichéry as well as in Chandernagore prominent and affluent Indian merchants had suffered indignities and loss of property, either at the hands of the foreign authorities or the provincial government; the former really did not have much to choose between the two.2 Regularity of trade and allied advantages were their main concern, rather than anything else. This was what the Indian and European free merchants wanted from these port towns and this above everything else seems to have often determined their decision.3

### IV

On 19 December 1735 Dupleix wrote a letter to Duvalaer, a close friend, informing him of some of his current losses, especially that of the Aimable. He wrote:

I can tell you confidentially that without this loss I was counting on going to France to plant cabbages. My ambition is mediocre, but after all what to do? I am nothing in Europe. Something must be done so as not to be obliged to go back as a beginner.4 Joseph François Dupleix came and lived in Chandernagore with the "mediocre ambition" of making enough money to go back to France where either a suitable post such as that of a Secretary of State or title of nobility had been secured for him by means of that sum. If he stayed on after 1737, it was for the time being at least because of disappointment in his financial ventures rather than anything else. He gained and lost a lot, but did not leave Bengal with anything nearing a fortune.5

It is difficult to determine the nature and extent of Dupleix's command over capital during this period. We know only about a few of his shares in some investments made by him and his associates; on an average they range between Rs 1,000 and Rs 30,000 and really do not indicate anything definite about his financial position.6 Apart from these shares, he invested a lot of money in buying ships. By 1732 he had already built up his "flotilla" of 10 or 11 ships, all painted red, names often changed to suit his preferences. Only two, the Heureux and the Union, were of three to four hundred tons; the rest were smaller. In August 1732 he was preparing to send two ships to Surat, two to the Maldives and one to Achin. If Vincens managed to buy the Union and the Pondichéry, one would go to Persia,

1 Garde Jazier, f. 174.

In Madras Suncarama, one of the principal Indian merchants, was deprived of part of his property and his privileges between 1730 and 1735. Love, Vestiges of Old Madras (London, 1913), ii, 137,258,274.

Naniappa, the broker of the FEIC at Pondichéry, was a victim of the vindictiveness of the Jesuits and Hebert, the governor. He died miserably in prison. See Procés-Verbaux des Delibérations du Conceil Souvernin (Pondichéry (Paris, (ii) bérations du Conceil Souverain (Pondichéry), i, 139; P. Olaguier, Les Jésuites a Pondichéry (Paris, 1932), passim 1932), passim.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "Memoire de la Bourdonnais a M.de Moracin, 1733", A.N. Colonies C<sup>3</sup> 25 f. 176.

<sup>4</sup> Cultru, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 175; Martineau, op. cit., p. 352.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 515-30.

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another to somewhere else. Two other ships had already left Chandernagore. The Fortune was to go to Manila. If destinations and other arrangements later changed a little from this plan, sketched in a letter to Trémisot in August 1732, it indicates quite well the approximate number of ships then under the control of Chandernagore. From time to time he would buy one or two more to replace damaged or lost ships, such as the Ressource and the Edward in 1735. The latter was sold to him by the Armenian Felix Saffar for Rs 9,500 and was of 300 tons. But even here one cannot ascertain how many he bought for himself and what was his share in all these buyings. According to Martineau the average annual investment of Dupleix in all activities did not go beyond Rs 80,000.2

The early years, however, were of excitement and promise. Dupleix's letters to friends such as Trémisot and Vincens are full of projects. To Vincens he offered very handsome terms. It was easy for him to make up a gap of Rs 30,000 to 40,000 if some prospective associates backed out. 3 Some assessment of his savings up to 1737 can be made on the basis of the letters he wrote to his brother. He was transferring his savings to France through both legitimate and unauthorized channels. By the end of 1737 he had in France about 250,000 livres or a little more than Rs 100,000.4 Both his biographers appear to be quite taken with the "modest" nature of this sum. Martineau maintains that Dumas and La Bourdonnais. with similar prerogatives and working in the same orbit, had made more money.5 Cultru points out, among other things, his habit of spending freely, mainly to keep up with his neighbours—directors of other European companies, whom he entertained lavishly. although he received a much smaller salary than at least the English governor of Calcutta. To come back to his transfers, his brother's position as Farmer General in France helped him to dispose of such contraband goods as agates, topazes and other precious objects which often formed a part of Dupleix's "remittances". It was Sichterman, his Dutch friend, who saw to the safe transfer of these goods through Pauw, a wine merchant of Amsterdam. He also sent such goods through captains to Duvalaër, his friend, then a director at the port of Lorient. During the one year of 1737 he had sent topazes worth Rs 12,000 to Duvalaer.6

These remittances were part of Dupleix's preparation to return home. By the end of 1737 prospects in India seemed quite uncertain to him. It was not only a question of commercial prospects. The losses of 1735 notwithstanding, he was able to make some profit in the next two years. The failure to secure the post of director in Pondichéry in 1735 seems to have hurt his pride a good deal. There was growing tension between him and the Company; he complained of having been rather shabbily treated by his masters in return for all that he had done to boost up French trade in Bengal. He wanted to leave

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> B.N. Fr. 8979 ff. 49-50v; Martineau, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Martineau, op. cit., p. 351.

<sup>3</sup> B.N. Fr. 8979 f. 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This included an unspecified but definitely modest sum inherited from his father, Cultru, op. cit., pp. 154, 170. Martineau, op. cit., p. 351.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Martineau, op. cit., p. 352; Cultru, op. cit., pp. 139, 171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>e</sup> Cultru, op. cit., pp. 151,159.

India, but needed somebody capable and trustworthy to stay back and wind up his affairs there. He had set his heart on his friend Vincens who, having resigned from the service of the Company, had settled in Chandernagore since 1733. Dupleix was trying to get him reinstated so as to secure his nomination as second councillor in the council of Chandernagore. Such a position would enable Vincens to look after Dupleix's affairs, who had Rs 400,000 tied up in various operations in 1738. But the Company refused to comply with Dupleix's request. And trade was very bad in 1738 and 1739. As a result Dupleix had to stay on till he could settle his affairs properly. But by 1740 he himself was writing to his friends that he was more than tired, "always losing on the sea", having "a devil of a gap" in his funds and finding with pains "the hopes of his return to Europe quite far away". He had twice made his fortune and lost it according to his own statement; whatever he had managed to send off to France was not sufficient for his standard of living or his ambition. In 1740, when a chance retirement of Dumas again opened for him the prospect of governorship of Pondichéry, his reaction was one of indifference. Pondichéry would have been an additional distinction for him, with a sizable fortune tucked away; now that he had to start almost all over again, he naturally preferred Chandernagore. Moreover, he felt that "this is my child, I have formed it—and there everything is formed, it is not possible to do more (there) without cheating the company".3

The career of Dupleix in Chandernagore was that of an employee of the FEIC, with no roots in this country. Whether in the early days of optimism or in the last years of struggle, he was bent upon going back to his home country. His activities do not reveal all the complexities of Asian trade, the mainstay of so many like him. He showed a lot of energy and determination both in tapping an old system and trying out some new lines. But as a privileged merchant-official, his experience does not represent that of an ordinary free merchant. With all hi, prerogatives, however, he was often short of funds and obliged to borrow heavily to meet expenses. He could not always control the supercargoes and the captains whom he trusted with his ships. We do not as yet know about his role in the internal markets of Bengal between Hugli and Calcutta and in Patna, where he regularly bought and sold on the account of his associates and himself. A knowledge of this along with what we know about his enterprises in long-distance Asian trade would perhaps help to assess better the contribution of private trade to the growth of a European port town like Chandernagore.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Martineau, op. cit., pp. 150-8, 345-8. Cultru, op. cit., pp. 160,168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cultru, op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 172.

# BOMBAY'S "COUNTRY TRADE" WITH CHINA (1765-1865)

### N. Benjamin

The expression "country trade" is of obscure origin. It was in vogue from the end of the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century. Broadly speaking, it included trade both by Indians and Europeans residing in India, the latter comprising the Portuguese, Dutch, French and British. The country trade had three divisions, viz., (i) the Indian coastal trade; (ii) the trade between Indian ports and Asian and African ports west of Cape Comorin; and (iii) the trade between Indian ports and ports east of Cape Comorin in Burma, Malaya and China.

In the present paper an attempt will be made to discuss this problem with respect to Bombay and China, for commercial relations between the two were important.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, only British and Indian traders will be covered, for the country traders of other nationalities were numerically insignificant.

The Britishers living in Bombay formed one distinct section of country traders. They consisted of the British merchants domiciled in India and the servants of the East India Company (who were allowed to trade privately as late as 1806). The number of British country traders greatly increased after 1784. In this year Parliament enacted the Commutation Act which reduced the import duty on tea from 115 to 12 per cent. Consequently smuggling of tea from Europe to Great Britain became unprofitable and the East India Company was required to import more of it from China. As against this the demand for Western commodities in China continued to be limited. The trade deficit could be met by export of bullion. But contemporary ideas disfavoured it. Under these circumstances the Company encouraged British private traders in India to export goods to China so that it could use their earnings to purchase tea<sup>3</sup> and these came to play an important role in the country trade. F.H. Toone affirmed that it was "chiefly in the hands of the (British) mercantile houses of Bombay and Calcutta". John Crawfurd echoed with a qualification: "The greater part of it, I should suppose, has (been in the hands of British merchants);

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> W.H. Coates, The Old Country Trade of the East Indies (Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson Ltd., London, 1911), preface, p. vii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Between 1775 and 1800, for example, of every 10 country ships trading in Canton six came from Bombay as against two each from Bengal and Madras, Pamela Nightingale, *Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806* (Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 128. The share of country ships from Bengal greatly increased in the following years.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Ibid. p. 7. The number of British country ships in Bombay increased from 12 in 1749-50 to 57 in 1792, Holden Furber, John Company at Work: A Study of European Expansion in India in the Late Eighteenth Century (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1948). p. 224.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 646 of 1830, minutes of evidence. Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to inquire into the present state of affairs of the East India Company and into the trade between Great Britain, the East Indies and China; with the minutes of evidence taken before the Committee, p. 355.

but there are many others besides British merchants in India concerned in that trade". Leading British firms engaged in it included Ritchie, Finlay & Co., Jardine, Matheson & Co., Forbes, Smith & Co. and Bruce, Fawcett & Co.

The Indian merchants comprised Parsis, Hindus and Muslims. The Parsis were the most prominent among them for many years under study. The first Parsi to go to China for commercial purposes was Hirji Jivanji Readymoney. This was in 1756. By the early 19th century they became leading country traders for that commerce. Ardaseer Cursetjee maintained in 1840 that they were the "principal" merchants.<sup>2</sup> H.G. Briggs corroborated: "Parsis, some twenty years ago, owned almost the whole of the splendid country maritime fleet that used then to grade between Bombay and China". D.F. Karaka agreed: "The bulk of the commerce...of Bombay with China...was until forty years ago, entirely in their hands, and many of the ships which carried the merchandise belonged to them".4 Many Parsi merchants were well-known in China. Among them the names of Hirjibhai Rustamii Kavasji Patel, Mancherji Kamaji, Pestanji Bamanji, Nasarvanji Manakji Wadia, Dadabhai Nasarvanji, Jijibhai Dadabhai, Hirji Readymoney and Jamshedji Jijibhai may be mentioned.

The Parsis constituted a minority community in Bombay. In 1780, 1812, 1842 and 1872 the aggregate population of Bombay was estimated at 100,000, 160,000, 200,000 and 644,405 and the Parsi population only at 3,087 (3.08 per cent), 13,156 (8.22 per cent). 20,000 (10 per cent) and 44,091 (6.84 per cent) respectively. Attempts have, therefore, been made to explain their overall economic advancement (including their role in the country trade) during the late 18th and 19th centuries. Karaka suggested:

...the barriers of caste and custom...acted as a formidable obstruction (for the non-Parsis). The Parsis, however, had always been free from caste prejudices, and on the advent of Europeans soon betook themselves to occupations they had never attempted before.6

Amalendu Guha endorses this view of the freedom of the Parsi community from the caste system and rigid traditions. As he puts it:

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 430.

3 The Parsis or Modern Zerdusthians: A Sketch (Edinburgh, 1852), pp. 84-5.

4 D. F. Karaka, History of the Parsis including their Manners, Customs, Religion and present Position, ii (Mac-

millan and Co., London, 1884), 245. There is also an indirect piece of evidence to show that the Parsis were a dominating force in the China trade. A census of foreign residents outside the English Company in Canton was taken on 28 January 1921. It was a labeled to the English Company in Canton was taken on the Canton was taken on 28 January 1831. It revealed that the number of Parsi merchants, clerks and servants (not necessarily from Rombay along) from Bombay alone) was 21,5 and 15 respectively. As against this there was not even a single Hindu or Muslim inhabitant in the area Other Chromids or Muslim inhabitant in the area. Others were Europeans and Americans, H.B. Morse, The Chronicles of the East India Company trading to China 1625, 1624. of the East India Company trading to China 1635-1834, iv (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1926), 273. The number of Parsis in Canton increased in subsequent years. At the burial of Dhunjeebhoy Dossabhoy Satna in 1849 there were 78 Parsis on hand, J. K. Fairbank, Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports 1842-1854 (Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 273. The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island is (The Times Press, 1969), p. 275.

The Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island, i (The Times Press, Bombay, 1909), 155-64.

6 D.F. Karaka, op. cit., p. 244.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 359 of 1840, minutes of evidence, Q. 1981. Report from the Select Committee on the trade with China together with the minutes of evidence, taken before them and an appendix and index. Also see the evidence of Alexander Mathesan, Q. 2146. Ibid.

## Bombay's "Country Trade" with China (1765-1865)

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As constituent elements of wider communities, the other caste-groups had wide and diverse social commitments....There were too many demands on their emerging leaderships. Parsis were, on the other hand, relatively free from such diverse social commitments.<sup>1</sup>

They have even been regarded as the most important modernizing force in the social life of western India.<sup>2</sup> A.K. Bagchi offers a different explanation. He contends:<sup>3</sup>

...the Parsis would not have been able to accumulate capital out of trade in a big way and to acquire the experience of markets which comes through external trade, had western India fallen under British sway in the days of rapacious conquest and plunder by the East India Company.

These explanations need to be scrutinized. The relative advantages to the Parsis from the absence of the caste system and rigid traditions appear to have been exaggerated. Many Gujarati communities too were not indifferent to gainful employment and examples can be cited to prove occupational mobility among them.<sup>4</sup> As for the other classes, this aspect of their behaviour has yet to be explored. Guha's statement that the Parsis were relatively free from diverse social commitments contains a factual error. Their role in the country's economic life was not due to freedom from "diverse social commitments" but in spite of them. Nor is Bagchi's argument convincing. True, much of western India was conquered by the Company in 1818. But it acquired Bombay in 1668. The first Parsi arrived there as early as 1640 when it was still a Portuguese possession. Before the close of the 17th century several Parsi families including Modis, Pandes, Banajis, Dadiseths and Wadias settled there. The process continued during the 18th century and their number greatly increased. Development of the trade of Bombay, especially with China, took place with the advent of these Parsis.<sup>5</sup>

Thus there is need to account for the rise of the Parsis. Robert E. Kennedy correctly notes that their Protestant ethic like the economic values of accumulation rather than consumption and a desire to work in the material world could have been a driving force, but as he cautions: "...values are only one factor in the total behaviour pattern. An analysis of a particular group must also include the opportunity it had to pursue its interests". The period under study witnessed Parsi entrepreneurial activity in various walks of life. For

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Amalendu Guha, "The Comprador Role of Parsi Seths 1750-1850", Economic and Political Weekly, v, no. 48 (28 Nov. 1970), 1935.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Eckehard Kulke, "Parsees as Leading Agents of Social Change in India", Leadership in South Asia, Seminar Series (unpublished) (School of Oriental and African Studies, London).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A.K. Bagchi, *Private Investment in India 1900-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 201-2.

See D.P. Pandit, "Creative Response in Indian Economy: A Regional Analysis", The Economic Weekly, ix, nc. 8 (23 Feb. 1957), 285.

Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, ix, pt. 2, Gujarat Population: Musalmans and Parsis (Government Central Press, Bombay, 1899), 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "The Protestant Ethic and the Parsis", The American Journal of Sociology, Ixviii, no.1 (July 1962), 17. <sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> An exhaustive account of this and other allied details is available in D.F. Karaka, op. cit. Refer to Amalendu Guha, "Parsi Seths as entrepreneurs, 1750-1850", Economic and Political Weekly, v, no. 35 (29 Aug. 1970), M-107 to M-115 for a summary of this book.

the present purposes, however, it would be sufficient to discuss the opportunities which the Parsi community had for its emergence in the country trade. As already known, the Parsis were prominent in the commercial life of western India even in the 17th and early 18th centuries. European companies employed them as brokers. The English Company sent them as supercargoes to foreign countries, principally China. This must have given them opportunities to be familiar with British business methods and Chinese markets. When the Company faced the problem of financing its Chinese imports, it tried various methods, Among them was the granting of permission to individual traders to send goods from India to China in its ships, for which they were required to pay in silver in Canton. This might also have stimulated Parsi trade with China. Secondly, while the avenue of trade with China was open, certain others were closed. They did carry on some trade with the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. But it was insignificant owing to, inter alia, piracy in the local seas. The same reason limited their trade with the eastern islands. As regards the westward trade, the Company's monopoly of trade between India and England came in their way till 1813. Thirdly, the Parsi activity in trade was sustained by Parsi activity in the construction of ships. The fame of Parsi shipbuilders was recorded by Europeans as early as 1716. Mrs Colonel Elwood reported as late as 1830:

The Parsees are the only shipbuilders in Bombay, and they possess an absolute monopoly in all its departments...some very fine ships have been constructed in these docks entirely by Parsees, without any other assistance, and mostly by the Jumsheedjee family.1

Between 1736 and 1840 14 vessels were built in the Bombay dockyard for Parsi merchants.<sup>2</sup> When the Company was debarred from trading in 1833, the Parsis bought many of its ships. Not only did the Bombay dockyard meet the shipping requirements of local merchants, but it even exported vessels. Between 1802 and 1833 five of them were exported to the Imam of Muscat. In 1838 two vessels were sent to Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Panjab. In 1840 it built a vessel for the Ceylon government. To this can be added the 87 vessels built for the Company and numerous vessels for the Crown.3

Most ships employed in the country trade were built in India.4 They were licensed by the British government in India to trade with China and hence they sailed under British colours. The owners and commanders of country ships entered into covenants with the government binding themselves, inter alia, to submit to the penalty of paying double the value of a ship and its cargo if the orders and regulations of its supercargoes in Canton were disobeyed. When a country ship arrived in Canton, the supercargoes instructed its

Narrative of A Journey overland from England, by the continent of Europe, Egypt and the Red Sea, to India, including a residence there, and voyage home, in the years 1825, 26, 27, and 28, i (Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London, 1830), 77.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 527 of 1840, calculated from Report from the Select Committee on East India produce together side of the select Committee on East India produce together si India produce together with the minutes of evidence, an appendix and index, pp. 609-10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 115 of 1814, William Dennison's evidence, minutes of the evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on petitions relating to East Indiabuilt shipping, p. 501. built shipping, p. 501.

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crew to maintain good conduct and not to enter into disputes or disturbances with the Chinese. On grounds of misconduct the supercargoes could even remove the commanders and officers of country ships.¹ But the last eventuality rarely took place. So far as the disposal of its cargo was concerned, the supercargoes did not exercise any control on the crew of a country ship. In the subsequent years British consuls in China exercised control over these vessels.

Data regarding the movement of country ships between Bombay and China for the entire period under study cannot be located. Details are available only for the period 1808-9 to 1828-9. In 1826-7 39 country ships left Bombay for Canton. This is the largest number for the whole period. The corresponding number of ships arriving in Bombay from Canton is 30 for the years 1827-8 and 1828-9.2 The condition of these ships was very good. Some of them were subsequently taken over by the Company. Certain others were enlisted in the Royal Navy as frigates. Their tonnage varied from 500 to 700. The larger ones were of 1,000 tons burthen and more.3

Country ships took more than seven months to reach China and return to Bombay. The freight rates charged varied from time to time. Around 1830 it was about £2 per ton from Bombay to China. The rate for the return journey was not generally reckoned by the ton. When not loaded by the owner, it was for the whole ship and was generally taken for a sum which ranged from 30s to £2 a ton. All this tended to change from the 1850s when steam ships became popular.

The country ships were normally manned by Indian lascars (mostly natives of Gujarat and adjoining areas) for two reasons—first, it was difficult to procure British sailors in India; secondly, the Asian summer was too warm for them. The Indian sailors were alert and active even in warm weather. They were lighter in weight. They could take in the sail and set it quicker. They were of a mild disposition and behaved in an orderly manner on reaching China. This was in sharp contrast to the unruly behaviour of British sailors which threatened to interrupt trade. They were as good as the British sailors in rigging. But they did not have the stamina of British sailors and hence were required in greater numbers. As a result their employment did not reduce the working expenses of a ship, although their wages were lower than those of British sailors. The commanders and officers of ships

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 122 of 1813, evidence of James Horsburge (pp. 437-8), Daniel Beale (p. 461) and James Drummond (pp. 528 and 531-2), minutes of evidence taken before the Committee of the whole House and the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Appendix at the end.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 646 of 1830, evidence of John Stewart (p. 356) and Richard 'Alsager (p. 489), op. cit. William Milburn also wrote: "Merchant ships of considerable burthen (from 600 to 1,300 tons) for the country trade and the service of the Company have been built here (in Bombay), which, in point of beauty of construction, excellent workmanship, and durability, are superior to any class of merchant ships in the world. Many Bombay-built ships of 25, 30, 32 and 40 years' standing may be met with", Oriental Commerce (Kingsbury, Parbury and Allen, London, 1825), p. 125.

D.R. Bhandarkar, "Shipping in Bombay in 1795-6", Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings, xiii (Dec. 1930), 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 646 of 1830, John Stewart's evidence, op. cit., p. 400.

were generally Europeans. Opulent Parsis adopted Western education, sports and dress and sometimes even dined with the Europeans. This roughly equal social relationship helped them to employ the latter. But the number of officers in the country ships was much less than that in the Company's *Indiamen*.

The Chinese looked down upon foreigners as barbarians. As such when a country ship anchored in their country, someone had to stand security for the payment of the customs duties on its cargo and the good conduct of its crew. This formality wa completed under arrangements between the agents of a country ship and any particular Hong merchant through whom they were to sell its cargo. These private arrangements ordinarily worked well. Sometimes a country ship did find difficulty in arranging a security without which its cargo could not be unloaded. Such cases were rare.<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of the period under study this requirement of security was abrogated. Another result of the Chinese contempt for foreigners was that only the port of Canton was open to them for many years and only in 1842 and 1858 did the Chinese open additional ports.

A reference may be made to Bombay's exports to China and imports therefrom. The chief items of export were cotton, opium, piece-goods, pearl, sandalwood and sundries. As against this the imports consisted of sugarcandy, piece-goods, tea, Chinaware, silk, tutenag, bullion and sundries. This list is particularly valid for the beginning of the 19th century.

Of all these items of trade raw cotton and opium were of the greatest importance. Export of raw cotton to China assumed importance from around 1770, when a severe famine occurred there and the Chinese government encouraged cultivation of foodgrains at the expense of cotton. The Chinese demand for raw cotton was extensive during the period under study and was significantly determined by the output of domestic cotton crop. In fact the country traders competed with the Company most in respect of the export of raw cotton.

The other important item of export was opium. It was sent there clandestinely, for the Chinese government had put a ban both on its import and use. This trade flourished for two reasons. First, the Chinese taste for Indian opium grew as rapidly as the Western taste for Chinese tea. Secondly, the Chinese bureaucracy, which was charged with stopping this trade, was corrupt and could be easily bought off. The illegality of this trade had a twofold impact: (i) the country traders sold opium to the smugglers and not to the regular

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 476 of 1821, evidence of John Stewart (p. 400) and Richard Alsager (p. 489), ibid, James Horsburgh's evidence, Report (relative to the trade with the East Indies and China) from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the means of extending and securing the for ign trade of the country, and to report to the House, together with the minutes of evidence taken in sessions 1820 and 1821, before the said Committee, 11 April 1821, p. 137; and House of Commons Paper no. 627 of 1853, R.W. Crawford's evidence, Q.1800, first report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the operation of the Act 3 & 4 Will, 4, c.85, for the better Government of Her Majesty's Indian territories, and to report their observations thereon to the House, and to whom leave was given to report from time to time to House, and to whom were referred several petitions, papers and documents, relative to the subject matter of the inquiry, together with the minutes of evidence and appendix.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 646 of 1830, J.B. Urmston's evidence, op. cit., p. 450.

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merchants; and (ii) when the Chinese officials tried to enforce prohibition, country ships carrying opium ceased to go to Canton and established their headquarters at the Lintin Island from where it was smuggled to the mainland. In 1858 the Chinese government legalized this trade.

The export of opium became extensive from the 1830s. The average number of opium chests exported to China via Bombay from central India in 1830/1-1839/40, 1840/1-1849/50, 1850/1-1859/60 and 1860/1-1863/4 was 11,033, 17,032, 28,929 and 40,017 respectively. The country traders did not have to compete with the Company in this trade. It was completely private and fetched huge profits. Bought at a prime cost of 200 to 250 dollars, after paying the expenses of transport, opium yielded a profit of 400 to 500 dollars a chest. Because of its clandestine nature and the domestic cultivation of poppy in China, the profits of the opium trade were subject to fluctuations. In 1821, for example, the Chinese government was fairly successful in checking opium smuggling. This had an immediate effect on the profitability of this trade. In 1839 the country traders surrendered opium to the Chinese government under advice from Captain Elliot, the Trade Superintendent of the British government. When the necessary compensation did not come forth from the latter, the distress among the Parsi country traders became so acute that two of them even committed suicide.<sup>3</sup>

The balance of trade was invariably in favour of the country traders. This resulted in a regular inflow of bullion into Bombay. Many country traders handed over their export earnings to the Company's agents in China in return for bills of exchange to be drawn in England or India. The Company's agents used these earnings to purchase tea for home consumption.<sup>4</sup>

Towards the end of the period under study the share of the Parsis in the country trade declined. As mentioned before, in 1831 the number of Parsi merchants in Canton was 21. As against this in 1856 the number of Parsi merchants and firms in Canton was only 11.5 In 1860 there were only eight Parsi merchants and firms in China out of which seven were in Shanghai and one in Amoy.6 From the 1840s they began to encounter greater competition

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 94 of 1865, calculated from the data available in Opium, Return of opium exported to China from Central India via Bombay since the year 1830, showing the number of chests, the rate of duty, the cost of collection and establishment, and the receipts on account of passes or duty in each year; and, similar return from Bengal, adding advances made to cultivators, expenses of collection and establishment; & c, p. 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H.B. Morse, op. cit., iii (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1926), 250.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> House of Commons Paper no. 359 of 1840, see Alexander Matheson's evidence, Q.2143, op.cit., Amalendu Guha is incorrect when he says: "When the trade with China was interrupted temporarily by the Opium War of 1839-42, several Parsis of Bombay committed suicide", Economic and Political Weekly, v, no. 48 (28 Nov. 1970), 1933. The Opium War was in fact a subsequent development and not the cause of the two suicides.

For fuller details of this triangular trade see Michael Greenberg, British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42 (Cambridge University Press, 1951), chapter I.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Bombay Almanack and Book of Direction, for 1856, being bissextile or leap year (The Bombay Gazette Press, Bombay, 1856), p.556.

The Bombay Almanack and Book of Direction, for 1860, being bissextile or leap year (The Bombay Gazette Press, Bombay, 1860), p.742.

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from other Indian communities engaged in trade. Their first rivals were the Khojas and other Muslim merchants who began to establish firms in China. But since these were people of lesser ability, the Parsis remained largely unaffected. Subsequently the Jews entered the China market and since they were men of greater business acumen, they largely succeeded in displacing the Parsis. The Jews took full advantage of the ports opened after 1842. They also opened up new lines of business. Secondly, the extension of steam communication to the Sino-Indian route adversely affected the Parsis, for they failed to switch over to steam ships. Thirdly, they incurred losses during the two Opium Wars (1839-42 and 1856-8). Fourthly, the failure of the Back Bay Reclamation Company also adversely affected them for they had invested enormous capital in it. Lastly, when the American Civil War (1861-5) broke out, export of raw cotton to Great Britain became very profitable and the Parsis shifted to this business.<sup>1</sup>

In the end the impact of Bombay's country trade with China on the affected parties may be recapitulated. In western and central India it certainly led to an expansion in the area under raw cotton and opium cultivation. This must have generated additional income in the rural sector. To the extent India-built ships manned by Indian lascars were employed in the country trade, additional opportunities for employment were thrown open in the non-agricultural sector. Indian country traders, particularly the Parsis, amassed huge personal fortunes, a part of which was used for the satisfaction of communal and cosmopolitan wants such as the construction of fire temples, towers of silence, roads, bridges, hospitals and educational institutions. Another part led to the establishment of modern industries in the subsequent period. British business houses shared the profits of trade and, when repatriated, these profits added to the drain of wealth from India to England. The British government was also a beneficiary of this trade and secured license fee (on ships), opium revenue and customs.

As The Imperial Gazetteer of India, viii (The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1908), 408 points out, "The supply of the American staple being suddenly cut off, Lancashire turned eagerly to Bombay for her cotton and poured into the pockets of the mercantile community about 81 million sterling over and W.f. the former price for their cotton". This section is based on D.F. Karaka, op. cit., p. 257, and W.f. Coates, op. cit., p.55.

Bombay's "Country Trade" with China (1765-1865)

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### APPENDIX

Number and tonnage of country ships plying between Bombay and Canton (1808-9 to 1828-9)

	From Bomba	ay to Canton	From Canton to Bombay		
Year	No. of ships	Tonnage	No. of ships	Tonnage	
	31	24,991	11	0.040	
1808-9	15	12,934	11	8,642	
1809-10	14	12,827	16	12,231	
1810-1	23	17,789	0 7	5,794	
1811-2	13	13,692	8 7 7	4,626	
1812-3	10	10,572	6	4,324	
1813-4	12	10,811	10	4,476	
1814-5	21	17,070	13	8,581	
1815-6	22	18,022	9	6,216	
1816-7	19	17,310	11	6,281	
1817-8	24		14	9,206	
1818-9	17	20,850	15	10,095	
1819-20	12	16,813	15	, 9,010	
1820-1		8,476	13	6,762	
1821-2	24	20,016	22	13,067	
1822-3	25	19,862	20	10,808	
1823-4	17	15,419	11	6,855	
1824-5	30	18,854	21	9,856	
1825-6	23	17,383	20	12,085	
1826-7	39	26,722	27	15,738	
1827-8	37	27,690	30	16,748	
1828-9	36	25,731	30	17,544	

Sources: (1) House of Commons Paper no. 285 of 1829, India and China trade. Papers relating to the trade with India and China including information concerning the consumption, prices, & c. of tea in foreign countries, pp. 32-3.

(2) House of Lords Paper no. 46 of 1831, further papers relating to the trade with India and China, for the years 1827-8 and 1828-9. (In continuation of accounts presented by His Majesty's command, 5 June 1829 and 9 February 1830) p. 10.

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### INDO-BRITISH TRADE BETWEEN 1833 AND 1847 AND THE COMMERCIAL CRISIS OF 1847-8

### Amales Tripathi

The abolition of the East India Company's India monopoly in 1813, followed by the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the most productive phase of the Industrial Revolution, had devastating effects on the traditional economy of India which did not escape the eagle eyes of Karl Marx. In the UK investment came to be heavily concentrated in enterprises which yielded their cost-reducing results within a fairly short period. Interest rates fell, the terms of trade grew better and the prices continued downward. The increase in production has been calculated at 38·2 per cent between the 1810s and 1820s, 47·2 per cent between 1820s and 1830s, 37·4 per cent between 1830s and 1840s and 39·3 per cent between 1840s and 1850s. Cotton industry alone expanded at the rate of six to seven per cent per year between 1815 and 1840. Broadly speaking, in the post-Napoleonic decades something like half the value of all British exports consisted of cotton manufactures. The British balance of payments depended on the fortunes of this single industry.

In my Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency 1793-1833 (Calcutta, 1956) I have analysed the short-term fluctuations and long-term trends in Indo-British commerce in the first two decades of free trade and shown how disastrous were its effects on the Indian cotton manufactures. Suffice it to say here that the decline of costs and prices of cotton goods of the UK,² the high price elasticity of demand for British textiles in India and the new rate of customs levied in Calcutta in 1815—all combined to favour a flood of imports from Great Britain, consisting mostly of piece-goods after 1814 and cotton twist and yarn after 1824. The changes in the terms of trade were revolutionary. Imports exceeded exports for the first time in 1818. The exchange value of the sicca rupee (henceforth S.R.), higher than the official rate of 2s 6d, began to sag. This was bound to happen unless exports from India were large enough to cover not only the value of imports, now exceptionally enlarged, but also the remittance of territorial charges on the Company's account and the remittance of private fortunes and profits and savings of the Company's officers and men, which alone amounted to 156 lakhs every year. The consequence was competition between the Company and the private traders for remittance in indigo and raw silk, increasing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> W.W. Rostow, British Economy of the Nineteenth Century (Oxford, 1949), p.17; Deane and Colc, British Economic Growth 1688-1959 (Cambridge, 1969), chapter V, esp. p. 192; E.J. Hobsbawm, The Pelican Economic History of Great Britain, iii, 64-8.

	Price per lb. (1812)	Price per 10.
<sup>2</sup> No. of yarn		1s 2·3d 1s10·6d 3s 3·9d
40	2s 6d	1s10.6d
	3s 6d	3s 3.9d
60	5s 2d	
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itish lican bitterness over the Company's remittance trade and ultimately pressure for abolition of the China monopoly which bore fruit in 1833.

By 1832, taking the Customs House valuation (which in the showing of H.H. Wilson and George Alexander Prinsep needed large corrections to reflect actual market prices of exported articles), the UK sent 56.5 per cent of Bengal's total imports and received 52.5 per cent of her total exports. All European and American rivals had been completely ousted. The import of cotton piece-goods into Bengal from the UK reached a new high in 1828—S.R. 72.64 lakhs—and that of twist and yarn S.R. 32.88 lakhs. The import of cotton piece-goods and yarn fell considerably in the next few years, but that of cotton twist and mule twist rose considerably in 1831, to fall again next year. In 1832 the value of piece-goods was still S.R. 39.72 lakhs.<sup>2</sup>

The overall picture was a larger rate of increase in British imports than in Indian exports. K.N. Chaudhuri has shown that between 1814 and 1854 the rate of increase in exports was just under three times the value of the base year (1814), while imports expanded over 10 times. The other significant features were the large imports of treasure and the size of the balance which remained after deducting the value of the imports of goods and treasure from that of the exports. Take the last good year of business before the crisis of 1830-3. In 1828-9 total import of merchandise amounted to S.R. 53-63 million, of treasure to S.R. 20.4 million, i.e., S.R. 73.67 million in aggregate, while the exports consisted of merchandise worth S.R. 111-29 million and treasure worth S.R. 4-6 million, i.e. S.R. 115.35 million. The balance of trade was thus favourable to India to the tune of S.R. 41.68 million. The principal commodities exported from India were indigo (S.R. 27 million), opium (S.R. 17 million), cotton (S.R. 15 million), raw silk (S.R. 10 million), cotton piece-goods (S.R. 11 million) and sugar (S.R. 4 million).3 The depression in the British market since 1829 hit indigo particularly hard. It upset the apple-cart of speculation with disastrous results for planters and the agency houses which financed them. Most of the agency houses in Calcutta failed. The Times calculated their debts at £14.75 million and John Crawfurd at £20 million, of which one-fourth would never be recovered. Silver flowed out of India in 1831 as the S.R. fell to Is 9d, i.e., below the specie export point.

Why did this crisis, which almost anticipated that of 1847-8, affect India so badly? One obvious reason was that Great Britain had become India's most important market. A recession or boom in the UK would be momentous for Indian exports. But the other, less obvious, reason was the special financial relation between India and the UK, independent of trade, which forced the former after the abolition of the China monopoly in 1833 to remit home charges through private trade or direct bullion export. The amount remitted by the private traders and the Company's civil and military servants had also to be accounted for as before. Melvill, the Secretary to the Company, calculated the home

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See K.N. Chaudhuri (ed), The Economic Development of India under the East India Company 1814-1858 (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 1-16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A. Tripathi, Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency 1793-1833, pp. 231-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Estimates of George Alexander Prinsep, Remarks on the External Commerce and Exchanges of Bengal, with Appendix of Accounts and Estimates (1823): K.N. Chaudhuri, op. cit., pp. 25-6 and Statistical appendix to Introduction; Tripathi, op. cit.

charges to be £3.2 million and private remittance to be £.5 million each year. The first must be remitted at any cost to keep the show going in London, though the second might be spread out over several years. Mackillop, a partner in Palmers, Mackillop & Co., said in 1833 that in the present state of Indian trade she could not afford to supply sufficient means for the remittance of the proceeds of goods sent from England in addition to the amount transferred by the Company and private individuals. India could no longer hope to send her cotton textiles (that trade had been lost since 1818); she was now entirely dependent on direct export of indigo and raw silk to the UK and indirect export of tea and silk from China, bought with her opium and raw cotton. How was the problem of balance of payments to be solved after the abolition of the China monopoly?

The agency houses like Alexander and Co., Cockrell, Trail and Co., and Richards Mackintosh and Co. suggested in 1827:

...the wisest plan would be to encourage the increase of capital in India, to ensure its distribution into the most natural and the most beneficial channels and by wise regulations to promote the cheapest cultivation of Indian produce and the best mode of remittance to this country.

They demanded free and unshackled competition and they got it in 1833. "Everything that tends to facilitate trade of India must be beneficial to India and enable that country most readily to meet all its engagements", said Horsley Palmer in his evidence in 1840. High hopes were held of the prospects of British imports into India—"the much apprehended prejudices and antipathies of the population of India", said Crawfurd in 1835, "had no real foundation in fact". He continued eloquently on the vast resources of India, most of which "have been rendered available to the consumption of civilized nations, solely through the agency of the capital and ingenuity of British subjects". But a pessimistic note was also heard. "Can cotton be produced", asked Doyle and Parker, "which shall command the English market in preference to that of America? Can sugar be produced which shall rival that of the West Indies? Can our silk compete with that of Italy"?2 Indigo was "the most treacherous of articles", as proved in the crises of 1826 and 1829-33. Import of opium, again, was being resisted by the Chinese emperor. Sugar ran against preference for the produce of the West Indies till 1836. Raw cotton had fluctuating markets in the UK and China. Wide physical separation of markets, slow transport, inland duties till 1836, low short-term elasticity of supplies for indigo, opium and cotton owing to their agricultural nature—all these factors bedevilled the problem of boosting Indian exports, necessary to cover the fast growing British imports, home charges and private remittance.

Meanwhile out of the total merchandise imports into Bengal, which rose from S.R.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Evidence of Melvill before Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to consider the petition of East India Company for relief, 14 Feb. 1840, QQ. 2 and 62. John Crawfurd in an estimate of 1835 puts it round £3 million, of which £2·1 million were permanent charges. See his A Sketch of the Commercial Resources and Monetary and Mercantile System of British India (1837), reprinted in K.N. Chaudhuri, op. cit., pp. 282-3. In 1842 it amounted to £3·3 million and in 1847 to £3·7 million. See evidence of J. D. Dickinson, 18 July 1848, before Secret Committee on Commercial Distress 1847-8, House of Commons 1847-8, vol. 8, part I, QQ. 7878-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Board of Customs, Salt and Opium, June 1835, Report of Doyle and Parker.

2·19 crores in 1834 to C.R. (Company's Rupee introduced in 1835 as the uniform currency of British India) 3·09 crores in 1836 and C.R. 3·62 crores in 1839, cotton piecegoods from the UK alone accounted for S.R. 75·8 lakhs, C.R. 1·27 crores and C.R. 1·59 crores respectively. In the same years the value of cotton piece-goods from the UK entering India amounted to S.R. 1·52 crores, C.R. 2·23 crores and C.R. 2·62 crores. Since prices of cotton goods were all the time falling, the increase in yardage was phenomenal—i.e., from 38·9 million yards in 1834 to 100·9 million yards in 1839. Next in importance was cotton twist and yarn, the weight imported into India rising from 4·2 million lbs. in 1834 (£315, 583) to 10·6 million lbs. in 1839 (£690, 916). A greater part of the twist and yarn entered Bengal.<sup>1</sup>

Out of the total Bengal exports to the UK of S.R. 4.51 crores in 1834, C.R. 7.12 crores in 1836 and C.R. 7.12 crores in 1839 raw cotton accounted for very little; indigo still dominated the scene with S.R. 57.31 lakhs in 1834, C.R. 1.03 crores in 1836 and C.R. 1.76 crores in 1839. Raw silk and silk piece-goods fared better, the raw material better than the manufactured. Sugar showed much improvement after the equalization of duties in 1836; it rose from S.R. 12.34 lakhs in 1834 to C.R. 65.59 lakhs in 1839. Saltpetre remained more or less constant. George Larpent, an eminent East India merchant, was happy about sugar, which rose from 3,800 tons to 26,000 tons, but unhappy about rum and tobacco, the duties on which were not equalized. Lord Auckland congratulated himself on the increase of raw cotton export from 9.3 million lbs. in five years ending 1813 to 48.3 million lbs. in five years ending 1838, but little of this suited the needs of Manchester and most of it went to China. The duty on Indian cotton piece-goods in the UK

1	Import of and yarn from		Import of cotton piece- goods into India	Import of cotton piece- goods into Bengal	
Year		nd Ceylon Value in	Value in creres of rupees	Value in crores of rupees	
1834 1835 1836 1837 1838 1839	4·2 5·3 6·5 8·4 10·7 10·6	·31 ·43 ·56 ·60 ·64 ·69	1·52 (S.R.) 1·69 (S.R.) 2·23 (C.R.) 1·82 (C.R.) 2·07 (C.R.) 2·62 (C.R.)	·75 (S.R.) ·81 (S.R.) 1·27 (C.R.) 1·04 (C.R.) 1·27 (C.R.) 1·59 (C.R.)	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Exports from Bengal to UK

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Year		Indigo (lakhs)	Silk piece- goods (lakhs)	Sugar (lakhs)	Raw silk (lakhs)	Cotton (lakhs)	Saltpetre (lakhs)
1834	S.R.	57·31	22·47	12·34	43·38	3·40	12·14
1835	S.R.	85·01	19·09	15·37	40·97	12	10·48
1836	C.R.	103·75	37·49	33·50	66·63	1·74	17·69
1837	C.R.	134·75	29·17	52·15	47·87	·41	19·83
1838	C.R.	96·85	33·36	63·65	78·27	·30	17·02
1839	C.R.	176·61	34·88	65·59	69·62	2·36	13·93

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> George Larpent's evidence before Select Committee of House of Lords appointed to consider the petition of East India Company for relief, 14 Feb. 1840, Q. 264. About rum and tobacco see petition of Bengal Chamber of Commerce, 17 April 1839. Consult. 24 April 1839.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Lord Auckland's minute on cotton cultivation in the East Indies, 14 Aug. 1839, in reply to the Court's letter of 15 March 1839 and memorial of Manchester merchants.

still amounted to 10 per cent while that on the British manufacture in India was reduced to 3.5 per cent. Duties on Indian silk goods still averaged more than 20 per cent, that on pepper from 200 to 300 per cent. Melvill pertinently pointed out that India's capacity to purchase British goods (and to pay the home charges, he might have added) was limited by the demand for its own produce in Britain which was being artificially restricted by protectionist measures.

If direct trade between India and the UK could not fully serve the purpose of remittance, what modes were to be adopted after the abolition of the China monopoly? As early as 1832 different modes were discussed between Horsley Palmer and the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company. The same were operative in 1840 when the Company's petition for relief was being heard by the Select Committee of the House of Lords. They were as follows:

- (1) Rupee bills on Indian treasuries were to be sold by the India House to the importers of Indian produce. In 1834-5 such bills fetched 1s 10.75 d per rupee. Paid in India four months after the Court had drawn them for cash, the Company gained four months' interest from this mode.
- (2) The Company's agents were to receive dollars in China from opium and cotton traders for bills on India, which dollars were to be advanced to private traders to purchase tea and silk against bills on London. Such advances realized 2s·25 d per rupee in 1834-5.
- (3) Advances were to be made in India by the Company's government to private traders on the security of goods, which were to be hypothecated to the Company and against which sterling bills on London were to be given by the private traders. Hypothecation would serve the purpose of collateral security. This mode commenced to a small extent in 1829 under Bentinck's approval and fetched 2s·37 d in 1834-5.
- (4) Sale of silk continued up to 1838 and fetched the highest remittance, 2s 10d, because it included profit.

In Melvill's view (1840) the Company realized a remittance of 2s ·89d (including silk) and 1s 11·76 d (excluding silk). If the remittance were made in bullion, it would produce, after deduction of interest and charges, only 1s 9·27 d. The Company was able to get such a high rate because of abstraction of its commercial capital after 1833 (£14·5 million), break-up of the old agency houses which created a vacuum in the money market of Calcutta, demand for additional capital for China trade in opium and good sale prices in the UK. We shall see later that the private capitalists of the UK objected to the simultaneous sale of bills in London and advances on hypothecation in India and China. The Company was still able to exercise a strong control over English trade with the Far East by manipulating exchange and by granting or withholding advances.

For the time being remittance through China was not only more lucrative, it was almost imperative. The share of Indian exports to the UK fell from 48 per cent in 1828-9 to 36 per cent in 1831-2, while that to China rose from 25 per cent to more than 36 per cent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Horsley Palmer's evidence before Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, 1832. QQ. 1283, 1336-7, 1348 et seq, 1441 et seq.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Melvill's evidence, Select Committee, House of Lords, 14 Feb. 1840, Q. 33, QQ. 86-8.

The trend that had begun due to depression in the UK continued after the abolition of the The trend amonopoly till it reached an all-time high in 1836-7. In 1828 India had a favourable balance of 22 million rupees with the UK and 10-2 million rupees with China; in 1833 17.2 million rupees with the UK and 28.9 million rupees with China; in 1836 23.9 million rupees with the UK and 49.6 million rupees with China and in 1837 15.4 million rupees with the UK and 23.2 million rupees with China. Even during the year of crisis in China, foreshadowing the Opium War, India's favourable balance with the UK was 15.4 million, short of four million rupees from that with China. This favourable balance was exhibited by export of bullion from China into India, but the greater part of it went to the UK on account of the home charges and private remittance. China trade had become crucial in solving the balance of payments problem for India.

The Superintendent of British Trade in China received a specific amount of dollars each season from British country traders, who imported cotton from Bombay and illicit opium from Bengal (some from Malwa through the western ports) for bills on the Indian treasuries. The dollars were advanced to British traders at Canton or Macao for bills on London against shipments of tea and silk on hypothecation system. Between 1833 and 1839 the value of raw cotton exported from Calcutta to China averaged a little more than C.R. 25.35 lakhs, from Madras about C.R. 8.84 lakhs and from Bombay about C.R. 64.67 lakhs. Opium, therefore, gradually came to be the linchpin of the triangular trade between the UK, India and China. As Peter Ward Fay writes:

Purchased at Calcutta or Bombay by money anxious to reach England, sold later on the China coast, opium generated the silver necessary to purchase England's tea; and thus permitted rupees to find their way to London concealed, so to speak, inside chests of congu, ouchong and pekoe.2

In 1840 George Larpent calculated the total exports from India and China to the UK at £9.6 million. Such huge exports could not have been paid for without the home charges of over £3 million and net exports from India to China of another £3 million.3 Opium accounted for the latter.

1 K.N. Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> "The Irrepressible Drug: Opium and the Opium War", Bengal Past and Present, July-Dec. 1971, p. 150.

<sup>3</sup> Export to UK		Mode by which exports	s were paid for
Article	Value (£)	Article	Value (£)
Indigo	2,000,000 (est.)	Manufactures to India	2,500,000 600,000
Sugar Silk Silk piece-goods	600,000 (est.) 750,000 (est.) 350,000	Manufactures to China Remittance of private fortunes	500,000 3,000,000
Saltpetre Rice Sundries Bombay cotton, etc.	300,000 100,000 1,000,000 1,400,000	Home charges Opium sent to China Cotton sent to China	£3,400,000 1,000,000 3,000,000
Tea from China Silk from China	2,300,000 800,000	Less return of bullion from China to India	<u>£4,400,000</u> £9,600,000 <u>1,500,000</u>
	9,600,000		£2,900,000 or say, £3,000,000

There had been a great increase of opium export to China since 1826. From an export of 3,810 chests of Bengal opium that year there was a sudden leap to 6,570 chests by 1827. The Malwa monopoly was given up in 1830 and Bengal cultivation was extended. This led to a fall in prices. Rise in total value was brought about by increasing the volume of ship. ment. Malwa opium poured forth in a torrent. The crisis began late in 1838. In spite of big speculators like Jardine Matheson keeping out and Russell & Co., the largest American house, advising their Bombay agents to stop buying, the small speculators swarmed in to take advantage of the falling prices. Before Canton merchants could bat their eyelashes, the Bengal and Bombay clippers had brought opium in a torrential flow. "Sell you must", Jardine wrote on 16 December 1838, "it is our only chance of saving ourselves from a most serious loss".

In march 1839 Commissioner Lin Tse-hsü issued an order forbidding any movement to and from Canton and sent troops to encircle the 13 foreign factories. The English Superintendent of Trade asked merchants to hand over all opium (no less than 20,280 chests) to him (not to Lin), which made it the property of the British Crown. He handed over the lot to Lin, who destroyed the drug and, flushed with success, demanded a bond committing the British merchants to observe the Chinese prohibition henceforth.

The Board of Customs, Salt and Opium at Calcutta, however, refused to stop sales of April 1839, in spite of the appeal of opium traders. Prices halved (from Rs 688 for Patna and Rs 620 for Banaras to Rs 365 for Patna and Rs 390 for Banaras). Even after Lin's action the sale for May was held. Prices now fell to one-fourth (Rs 235 for Patna and Rs 197 for Banaras). In July prices looked up and continued to rise in January 1840. Exasperated by the intransigence of the opium traders, which was really an act of despair caused by the obstinacy of the Bengal government (which, again, could be traced to its utter dependence on opium revenue), Commissioner Lin struck. The Opium War began.3

Business activity had been falling off in the UK since 1839 and by the winter of 1841-2 she was in the trough of a depression.4 Criticism of the mode in which the Company was remitting its funds became louder in this context. As early as 1833 the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had agitated against the Company manipulating exchange by granting or withholding advances in India on the shipment of produce. 5 Three years later they wrote

<sup>1</sup> Year	No. of Bengal chests	Total no. of chests
1834	exported to China 10,207	exported to China 21,885
1835	14,851	30, 202
1836 1837	12,606 19,600	34,033 34,373
1838	18.212	40,200
Compiled from Morse	International Polations:	

- e, International Relations, i. <sup>2</sup> William Jardine to Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, 5 Dec. 1838, W. Jardine Private Letter Books, v, 7.
- 3 For the course of events see Peter Ward Fay, op. cit., and Orville Schell (tr.), Tsiang Tung-fu, Chung-kuo Chin tai-shih (Hongkong, 1955), and 1965. kuo Chin tai-shih (Hongkong, 1955), pp. 12-24.
- 4 W.W. Rostow, op. cit., Table II, p. 33.
- <sup>5</sup> Proceedings, Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 9 Feb. 1833.

to the Treasury that Indian governments advanced money at an exchange rate different from that obtaining in London and that which the cost of transmitting bullion would justify. This depressed the English rate of exchange and made British merchants pay higher rates than their Indian competitors. They proposed immediate closure of the treasury at Canton on the ground that the trade of China should be financed from London. The Company should sell bills on Bengal and Bombay by which private merchants could place funds in China for purchase of tea and silk and make remittances from China to India for opium and cotton. The Glasgow East India Association wrote to the India Board in a similar vein on 19 May 1835 and the London East India and China Association to the Court of Directors on 27 February 1837. Advances to private traders in China were discontinued from 1840, but those in India were not. In his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords (1840) Larpent said:

Our complaint, now, in fact, is confined solely to this, that we ought to know, if possible...what sum will be thrown, as it were, as capital in the market of India, and what sum will be open to us to send as capital out to India. In times of difficulty in this country, when the Company can raise only a limited sum, and leaving a large amount to be remitted from India, there is an encouragement held out to excessive speculation in India by forcing, as it were, the export of goods.<sup>2</sup>

The immediate effect was depreciation of exchange below commercial rates and this had the tendency to encourage speculation in exports by cheapening them in terms of foreign currency irrespective of the normal business calculations. Larpent advised that the government should not expect to make a profit from direct exchange operations. They were getting 2s on an average (though only 1s 11d in 1840). But they should not expect a higher rate than 1s 10·25d. The Company had gained, rather than lost, by loss of trade.

The hypothecation system, of which the British merchants were so critical in the 1830s and 1840s, arose in fact out of an acute dearth of capital in Calcutta caused by the failure of the principal agency houses between 1829 and 1835. With the termination of the Company's China monopoly, a further £3 million to £4 million of private capital had been removed. A deficiency of nearly £20 million meant much in a restricted money-market. It could only be alleviated by offering a high and tempting exchange rate. The merchants in Calcutta had no exchange banks to take recourse to. They had to fall back on the advances of the East India Company's governments and grant bills against shipments on terms largely in excess of the bullion rate of exchange. Their repeated attempts to establish a chartered bank must be interpreted in this context. The first move was Jardine's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ibid., 3 Feb. 1835. According to John Crawfurd the remittances from India through merchant bills in 1835-6 amounted to £1,133,228/8s/4d and from China by the same to £1,338,028/10s/4d. See also East India Revenues and Remittances, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 28 July 1836

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Larpent's evidence before Select Committee, House of Lords (1840), op. cit., Q. 155.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. QQ. 150-7. William Patrick Paton said the same thing before the Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit., QQ. 7692-3. John Crawfurd says that the East India Company received 1s 8d for a sicca rupee for indigo and silk during three years ending 1829-30, but in 1835-6 it received 2s 1d to 2s 2d on the hypothecation system. K.N. Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 289.

proposal for a Bank of Asia in 1840. The Court of Directors objected to a combination of banking and remittance operations under it, although Lord Auckland and his secretary, H.J. Prinsep, favoured the idea. It was dropped in view of dissensions in the Governor-General's Executive Council. The Company continued the practice of advances with profit.

The chief objection to the hypothecation system was that it primarily considered the price of goods in the Indian market, not the ultimate result of export, i.e., the rate of freight, the rate of exchange and the state of the English market for the produce when it reached there.2 The amount of advance was not regulated by the existing state of commerce, but by the political exigencies of the state. The rate of exchange was guided by the changing preference for one of the two modes—sale of bills in London and advance in India—and by the varying degrees of success in each. Hence generosity alternated with niggardliness, Such uncertainty drove out the more prudent exporters, leaving the field to speculators. Again, the Court sold bills to London capitalists at one rate, but the Indian governments were often compelled, to attract supplies at all, to undersell them at Calcutta. As Paton pointed out in 1848, one might buy a bill in London at 1s 8d and by the time the bill reached India, the Company might have reduced exchange on London to ls 9.50d. The London capitalists were thus discouraged from sending funds to India and those, lacking funds in India but inclined to speculate, had a field day.3

How far was this grievance true? We can construct a series from figures given by Melvill in 1840 and Dickinson in 1848 (both secretaries to the Company) on the amounts of rupee bills sold in London and advances made in India on hypothecation system.4

Year	Rupee bills on India	Advances in China	Advances in India	Sale of Silk
£	£	£	£	£
1834-5	732,000	511,485	222,368	
1835-6	2,045,253	957,738	1,099,016	
1836-7	2,042,232	968,236	1,032,573	
1837-8	1,706,185	297,857	990,655	
1838-9	2,346,591	394,396	624,716	
1839-40	1,439,525		1,193,104	
1840-1	1,174,450		708,200	
1841-2	2,589,283		893,261	
1842-3	1,197,438		489,473	
1843-4	2,801,731		258,410	
1844-5	2,516,951	142 (	278,838	
1845-6	3,065,709		890,799	
1846-7	3,097,041		980,547	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Court of Directors to the Board of Control, 30 April 1840, and Auckland to Court, 21 April 1841, Return to House of Commons, 7 April 1843, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> William Patrick Paton's evidence before Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit., Q. 7676.

<sup>3</sup> Govt. of India to Court (Finance), 4 April 1842.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Gevt. of India to Court (Finance), 4 Aug. 1843, corroborated by Paton's evidence, op. cit., Q. 7700.

<sup>4</sup> For slightly different figures see Govt. of India, Finance Preceedings, 1 April 1848, vol. 132. Paton's figures tally with Dickinson's see Paton's mind.

figures tally with Dickinson's, see Paton's evidence before Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit., Q. 7866. For Dickinson's figures see Ibid. Q. 7892.

It is clear from the table that the sale of bills in London had always been the principal mode. Though the advances in India showed a trend towards increase in 1835 and 1836. mode. The was a precipitous fall in 1838. After registering the highest peak in 1839, which can be ascribed to the China crisis, the fall began again. The figure for 1843 was almost can be also as that of 1834 and it was only in the last two years, 1845 and 1846, that the trend to rise was distinctly perceived. The opposition of London capitalists to hypothecation bore fruit under Ellenborough's governor-generalship. As the Chairman of the Lords Select Committee in 1840 he had been much impressed by their objection. He was against simultaneous operation of two modes. "The operations of one must have, to say the least, a strong tendency to defeat the success of the other". His government stressed the necessity of "leaving the Indian markets to be operated on by mercantile enterprise rather than be governed by political wants of the state", since "the irregular intrusions of an overwhelming Government competition" had unwholesome effects on trade. In reply, however, the Court refused to "promise any adherence to any mode of remittance to the exclusion of others."2 Even before this H.J. Prinsep, Secretary to the Supreme Government, had stated in a minute that "the Government as remitter of fund for its home expenditure should consider itself in the same light as an individual would and should seek only to do the best for itself and for the Home Treasury it can". The Court said so in replies to private British capitalists in 1842, 1843 and 1848.4 The contradictions between the monopolist and the free trader appeared now in a new guise, to which were added the contradictions between British capitalists operating from London and British capitalists operating from India. While the former objected to advances in India, the latter, represented by Calcutta agency houses like Gisborne & Co. Oswald, Seal & Co., Cockerell & Co., Carr, Tagore & Co., Chapman, Griffiths, Paul & Co., Jardine, Skinner & Co., Colville, Gilmore & Co. and Allan, Deffell & Co. appealed to the Bengal government for larger advances on hypothecation of indigo consignments.5 The pressure on the Calcutta money-market, caused by Hardinge's Sikh War, could not otherwise be relieved. The government obliged, to the great annoyance of capitalists in London who, faced with another trade depression, appealed against it to Lord John Russell<sup>6</sup> and to Lord Dalhousie.<sup>7</sup> Their agents in Calcutta put up a memorial on 1 April 1848.8 The burden of their appeal was that during 1847-8 the hypothecation system had been the one great cause of the commercial distress in Calcutta and London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Govt. of India to Court (Finance), 4 Aug. 1843; same to same (Finance), 9 Feb. 1844.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Court to Governor-General in Council (Finance), 29 Nov. 1843.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Minute of H.J. Prinsep, Finance Proceedings, 5 Feb. 1838.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Court's reply to Messrs Crawfurd, Colvin & Co., 13 July 1842. Court's reply to Gregson and Glasgow East India and China Association, 1843, Court's reply to Duckworth and East India and China Association of Liverpool. Dickinson's evidence before Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit., Q. 7936.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Dickinson's evidence, op. cit., QQ. 7915-6.

<sup>6</sup> London East India and China Association to Lord John Russell, 16 Dec. 1847.

Some British merchants to Lord Dalhousie, March 1848, Suppl. App. no. 46 to Report from the Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit.
 Finance Proceedings, April 1848. Paton's evidence, cited above, is exactly the same.

The hypothecation system, however, was only partly responsible for the crisis of 1847-8. There were certain other factors like over-trading which the London capitalists glossed over conveniently.

Let us take them up one by one. After the fall of the agency houses in 1833 two types of establishments took their place. One group was composed of parties, "respectable in point of character and talent, and, in some instances, well-connected in this country (UK), but not known, or ever reputed to possess property or capital of thieir own". The other group consisted of "branch establishments of capitalists in England, in direct connection of dependence". The capitalists in England sent agents, called "drummers", to manufacturing districts in the UK to beat up for consignments to India.

As an inducement to speculation, advances are frequently made upon such consignments, by bills, at six or twelve months, to the extent of from two-thirds to three-quarters of their value. The consignee is always liable for whatever amount the consignment may realise, short of the advance, but he is sometimes guaranteed against failure in India. The charge for sale, guarantee and remittance is from 7 to 10 per cent, of which the home establishment receives two-fifths or one-half...and, in return, allows the Indian establishment a like proportion of the commissions on all consignments from India. The consigner's instructions are, generally, to realise and remit in good bills....<sup>2</sup>

The goods would be paid for by bills at six months and as soon as they were shipped an advance was obtained by a bill at six months again for a large part of first costs by the consignee, who, again, in his favour drew upon the house in India, against the bills of lading transmitted. Quite often these bills were renewed at maturity on pretence of affording time for the returns of a long trade.

Through this and other sources a large amount of funds would constantly keep accumulating in India. This belonged to the home establishments, on which they received Indian interest. The Indian establishments had the advantage to employ it, but at their own risk, in making the necessary advances on Indian produce—charging the proprietor two and a half per cent on the advance, two and a half per cent on the sale or shipment of the produce and 12 per cent interest. Indian agents often became the virtual monopolists of produce with an uncontrolled power to regulate exchange as well as prices. If the produce was shipped to Europe on the proprietor's account, the agent's advance and charges were repaid by bills drawn against it in favour of the London establishment, to whom it was consigned, but at an exchange rate of from 2d to 3d per rupee, i.e., from 10 to 12 per cent more than his own bills transmitted to the British manufacturers in return for consignments from England. If the produce was shipped on the agent's account, the fund of the home establishment was remitted in bills against the shipment, at the same exchange rate as bills in favour of the manufacturers.

Now for the first group, i.e., respectable and well-connected parties without capital

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Crawfurd in K.N. Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 284.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid. pp. 284-7.

who could bring credit from home establishments. They were dependent on the Indian establishments for purchase of cargo as well as negotiation of bills. The cargo was hypothecated as security for the bills and consigned to the home establishment.

Indian establishments often became principal shippers of Indian produce not because of profits they anticipated by an advance of price in London but for making business for friends at home, because former drafts on the home establishments would soon fall due and must be provided for. It was easy to purchase a cargo of sugar or indigo, pay for it in bills upon the London house at 10 months' date and transmit the shipping documents by the overland mail. Its drafts and bills of lading would arrive at the same time, i.e., after two months, but while the former still had eight months to run, the latter could be funded at Lombard Street immediately. The London house was thus put in fund long before the draft would fall due. Merchants carrying on trade by means of such long-dated bills could go on for a number of years, thus securing quite a large amount of capital. As Sir Charles Wood put it, "The East India trade appeared to be carried on less with a view to profit or loss, than as a mode of raising money by the creation of bills". The Manchester Guardian described it as "the hugest bubble of accommodation credit in the world", made up of drafts, re-drafts, advances and hypothecation. The first breath of doubt or discredit would throw the whole system into confusion. The Secret Committee on Commercial Distress pinned down Paton, a Glasgow merchant, to admit that it was rather the long-dated bill than the hypothecation system which brought about the crisis of 1847.2

Post-war speculations in opium played an important part in abstracting capital from the Calcutta money-market and helping over-trading. Cultivation of poppy had been restricted during and after the crisis till 1841-2. Thereafter it rose quickly from 2.09 lakh bighas to 2.9 lakh bighas in 1845-6.3 Revenue from the monopoly rose from C.R.1.49 crores in 1842 to C.R. 2.87 crores in 1845. In October 1845 the Bengal Chamber of Commerce complained:

All who have dealings in money or goods must be aware of the effect which the coming on of the large opium sales produces, as they cannot but have experienced that the abstraction at once from the circulation of 70 or 80 lacs of rupees does raise the value of money and lower that of goods.<sup>4</sup>

The restriction of supply of Malwa opium in 1844 had caused the high prices and not any expansion of the eastern market. Speculators held huge stocks for resale without any intention to ship it. The fall of prices was not long in coming. Prices at Calcutta sales in 1846-7 dropped from C.R. 1,268 to C.R. 877 per chest. The harvest that year rose to 30,493 chests.<sup>5</sup>

As before, the next important article was indigo. Since 1833 there had been two sources of finance available to the managing agents who financed the indigo planters.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Bengal Harkaru, 3 Feb. 1848.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Paton's evidence before Select Committee on Commercial Distress (1847-8), op. cit., QQ 7823-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Board of Customs, Salt and Opium—Opium, 2 May 1850, no. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 20 Oct. 1845; 27 Oct. 1845, no. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. 2 May 1850, no. 39. See also Enclosure no. 4 to Sir J. Bowring, Consul in Canton, to Earl of Clarendon, 8 Jan. 1856, Papers relating to the Opium Trade in China, 1842-56.

One was hypothecation, discussed above, and the other was the Union Bank of Calcutta. From a small beginning in 1829 the Union Bank had raised its capital to 15 lakhs when it secured a charter in 1835. It was paying a dividend of 10 per cent and its stocks sold at a premium of 34 per cent. Within five months in 1838 its capital rose to 80 lakhs and by the end of 1839 stood at one crore. From its inception the Union Bank had been heavily involved in indigo business, though, under the deed of partnership, loans on landed property or on blocks of indigo factories were not permissible. Advances were made on cash credits collaterally secured by mortgages including indigo factories. In spite of protest by a section of the directorate in view of recurring stagnation of indigo trade, nearly half of the Bank's loans and credits on deposit of goods and other securities had gone to the planters by 1842. Failure of some planters' agencies like Fergusson Brothers and Gilmore & Co. during 1841-3 confirmed the fears of the minority. It was realized in 1843 that the agencies had piled up a debt of 60 lakhs.2 As the minority pressed for a total ban on loans to planters, the majority opposed this on the ground that restriction would worsen the crisis. Yet the Bank decided not to advance more than the actual outlay on the season's cultivation.3 The prices did not rise. In October 1844 an irate Stewart advised disposal of the factories even at a loss. But Dwarkanath Tagore, the spokesman of the majority(mostly Europeans), opposed Stewart. He wrote:

The mischief has been done and we must just quietly get out of it with as little loss as possible. It must be effected soberly and advisedly, and not by stopping the advances as you suggested. This would have made bad worse.... There is no want of money but who in the face of the prices will purchase a concern which will barely pay the interest on this money. 4

Dwarkanath had some indigo concerns but he could not be held directly responsible for the crisis of 1847-8, for he had gone back to England in 1845 to die there on 1 August 1846.5 Radhamadhab Banerjee, another director with 146 shares, tried in vain to stop the orgy of speculation unleashed by others less honest and circumspect like William Patrick Grant. 6 Credit was given on the name and not on the shares. Seven out of eight directors took advantage of this advance system for their own houses. Dividends were paid out of deposits. No importance was attached to publication of accounts.7 The President-

- <sup>1</sup> Statement of J.C. Stewart, Secretary to the Union Bank, The Bengal Harkaru, 18 Jan. 1848.
- <sup>2</sup> In N.K. Sinha's account total assets locked up in factories amounted to 31 lakhs and 25 lakhs had been advanced for the part to 25 lakhs had been advanced for the next year, Economic History of Bengal, iii, 65.
- <sup>3</sup> The usual practice was to advance on average yearly value of the produce or the market value of the block.
- <sup>4</sup> Dwarkanath Tagore to Stewart, 12 Oct. 1844, The Bengal Harkaru, 18 Jan. 1848.
- Debendranath, his son, did not really take much interest in either Carr, Tagore & Co. or the Union Bank. Bank.
- 6 The Bengal Harkaru, 28 Feb. 1848.
- <sup>7</sup> For other frauds committed on the shareholders see C. N. Cooke, The Rise, Progress and Present Conditions of Banking in India (Calcutta, 1863)

in-Council reported to Lord Hardinge that "they were fabricated to deceive public".1

For one thing, the crisis was one of low indigo prices throughout the 1840s. It was partly caused by excessive supply and partly by limited demand. A correspondent of *The Bengal Harkaru* states: "30,000 chests, the fruits of surplus of 20 years encumbering the marts of Europe, stand like evil sentinels to paralyse the value of each new importation". Any plan of artificially starving the market would fail whenever supplies recommenced. Abandonment of marginal factories would rebound on the managing agents. Even a solution as desperate as burning a portion of the season's production was discussed. Nothing short of a severe restriction on cultivation would do, but that meant a lot of self-denial and foresight which became more scarce than cash at the onset of a commercial depression in the UK, the chief market for indigo.

The reasons for this commercial crisis in the UK can be detailed below. A capital shortage was felt in London due to excessive railway speculation in October 1845, Secondly, under the shadow of the Irish potato famine Peel's proposal for a repeal of the Corn Laws was presented to the country in February 1846. The money-market was faced with the prospect of heavy importation of additional food-stuff with attendant drain of bullion resources. Thirdly, the short American cotton crop of 1845-6 caused high prices of a staple which amounted to 80 per cent of Britain's total supplies. Fourthly, a poor West European harvest in 1846 caused further anxieties and the American cotton crop fell further. All this reacted on home consumption, leading to heavy unemployment in Lancashire. The bullion resources of the Issue Department of the Bank of England fell between January and April 1847 and, despite a double rise in the bank-rate, the drain continued, which forced the Bank to introduce a severe rationing of the bills it would accept. Meanwhile wheat prices had been soaring. The dealers, however, grossly underrated the elasticity of supply and the harvest prospects of 1847 were good. Prices came tumbling down. Corn dealers in London and Liverpool failed.3 These in turn involved other houses which had extended their credit. Advances, which had been so readily made formerly upon produce or bills of lading, were very difficult to obtain. The over-strained credit structure collapsed like a house of cards. The scramble for liquidity was intense. The reserves of the Banking Department dwindled. The knowledge of it caused the final panic as everybody feared that the Bank Charter Act of 1844 would begin to operate and the Bank would have to refuse further advances and discounts. Assets other than bank-notes were almost unmarketable. The heaviest rates gave no incentive to lenders. The houses doing business with India frantically called in their money and their branch establishments in India frantically tried to export articles like indigo so that their earlier bills could be met. With indigo prices falling all the time, both were placed in a tragic quandary. Some of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Governor-General-in-Council to Court, 27 May 1848, no. 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The Bengal Harkaru, 9 Aug. 1847.

A commercial letter from London, dated 24 August 1847, estimates the loss of corn dealers to be more than £1 million. See also evidence of J. H. Palmer before the Secret Committee on Commercial Distress, op. cit., Q. 1944.

the London houses like Cockerell & Co., Fry, Griffiths & Co. and Lyall Brothers failed. The London correspondent of *The Bengal Harkaru* compares the crisis to "an earthquake, as it were, engulfing so many of all classes from the highest to the lowest".<sup>1</sup>

Before the Bank of England was allowed by the Treasury on 25 October 1847 to extend loans at not less than eight per cent the mischief had been done. In July 1847 indigo prices had fallen by 4d to 6d for fine sorts, 3d for middle sorts and 2d to 3d for inferior sorts. In October 1847 there was a further fall of 3d to 6d according to quality. Calcutta merchants scrambled for liquidity. The Bank of Bengal refused to play the liberal role of the Bank of England. It was statutorily forbidden to engage in exchange business. Its rates of discount in this period would explain the ramifications of the crisis.<sup>2</sup>

Discount	Dec. 1846	Sept. 1847
Private bills and notes within three months	9%	10%
Government acceptances within three months	5%	6%
Interest charges on loans and account of credit		
not exceeding three months on deposit of		
company's paper	$8\% \text{ to } 8\frac{1}{2}\%$	91/2%
Interest charges on fixed loans	8%	9%
Interest charges on deposit of metals and indig		9% to 9½%
The deepening crisis in the UK made matters	s worse in October.	

The Union Bank, doing unsound business from the early 1840s, could no longer withstand the pressure. It began recklessly to accommodate its own directors. According to the evidence of its secretary it began to issue more and more post-bills. By means of these notes, payable at six or 12 months after date, the credit of the shareholders might be pledged to an almost unlimited extent, even if the Bank's credit was absolutely gone. Such bills rose from C.R. 4·58 lakhs in July 1845 to C.R. 13 lakhs in January 1847 and C.R. 27 lakhs in July 1847. "W.P. Grant had himself taken out some of the post-bills upon his bare promissory notes and a general robbery had been committed upon the funds of the bank". Nine houses, owing considerable funds to the Bank, failed in November; Carr, Tagore & Co., one of the principal clients, failed on 31 December. Their property consisted mostly of indigo, silk, sugar and saltpetre factories, Union Bank and other joint stock share and personal loans which were unrealizable. In July 1847 the Union Bank's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> J. W. C. T. Dickens v. Union Bank, The Bengal Harkaru, 28 Feb. 1848.

4 Names of some companies that failed	Liabilities (million rupees)
Cockerell & Co.	2.2
Colville, Gibmore & Co.	2.7
Lyall, Matheson & Co.	.94
Carr, Tagore & Co.	
Oswald, Seal & Co.	
Rustomji, Turner & Co.	
<sup>5</sup> Friend of India, 6 Apr. 1848.	

<sup>1</sup> The Bengal Harkaru, 8 Dec. 1847.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Finance: Bengal Letters and Enclosures Received, 1847, 94 API and 94 AP5.

paid-up 1,000 rupee shares showed discount for the first time, which rose rapidly till in January 1848 they lost all value. Before this London firms like Glyn & Co. had refused to protect its bills. It closed its doors on 15 January. In all about 22 houses succumbed during the crisis and failures continued till by 1850 42 agency houses had gone into liquidation.

Absence of limited liability joint-stock corporation concept and exchange banking facilities, loop-holes in law, over-trading, overspeculation, advances to plausible merchants without capital and fraud and failure of the principals in London combined to create the crisis which shook the Indian business world in 1847-8. Hypothecation system alone was not responsible. Long-dated bills were a greater evil. But the most important factors in the Indo-British commerce were the imperative necessity to remit £3.2 to £3.7 million on account of home charges, £.5 to £1 million of private profit, savings and the returns of the everincreasing import of British cotton goods and metals. To remit them in Indian produce like indigo, silk, cotton and opium often became hazardous. A review of foreign trade of India reveals a close interrelation between the ordinary course of trade and capital movements. The pressure of the transfer problem introduced an element of instability that was both short-term and long-term. As long as the level of world demand for India's exports remained high, the transfer problem solved itself. But any downward trend in demand of opium or indigo was likely to produce the type of short-term dislocation discussed above. The long-term effect was encouragement mainly of raw materials. The result was a basic imbalance in the structure of the economy as a whole. John Stuart Mill emphasized importation of foreign capital into India. As we know, though this was done on railway account on a considerable scale and in developing jute or tea industry. the character of foreign capital investment did not basically affect the imbalance.

Period
July 1847
October 1847
December 1847
January 1848

Friend of India, 20 Jan. 1848.

Discount on 1,000 rupee shares of Union Bank 30-50 400-450 750-800 0-0

REVIEW ARTICLE

## INDIAN FEUDALISM RETOUCHED\*

## R. S. Sharma

The greatest living epigraphist in India, Professor D.C. Sircar has proved to be a prolific writer and an indefatigable researcher. During the last 10 years he has produced more than 15 books, the contents of which have been mainly culled from about a thousand of his articles based on inscriptions and other sources. The present study comprises the matter drawn from nearly 40 papers of his, though all of them do not deal with "political and administrative systems". A good deal of stuff is concerned with political and dynastic history, which is the forté of Professor Sircar, but there is also quite a lot about fiscal system and administrative organization based on land charters.

Professor Sircar is at his best in the decipherment of disputed words in inscriptions and in the discussion of their meanings. He takes pleasure in polemics concerned with identification of eras, places and persons, and emendations of readings. He has mellowed down over the years, and his once sharp invectives have now become strong criticisms. Generally reluctant to concede any point to his critics, he has revised and modified his old interpretation of terms occurring in inscriptions edited by him (p. 261). He has also tried to update many of his old articles through footnotes. The result is that the present collection supplements and elaborates the information provided in his Indian Epigraphical Glossary. The explanation of such terms as āhāra, bhoga, bhoga-patika, bhogika, dharmādhikārin, kara-śāsana, kraya-śāsana, kulyavāpa, nihelapati or nihilapati, nikara, panga, paramadaivata, varşavara, sarabhanga and trnodaka is illuminating. Land charters are classified into different categories such as kara-śāsana, kraya-śāsana, etc., by the author with clarity and precision.1 However, each term has to be understood in the context in which it occurs and the time and place to which it belongs. For instance, the term dharmādhikārin, in the sense of the head of the department of religious affairs, cannot be equated with the Asokan dharma-mahāmātra, whose functions were concerned with the general maintenance of the social and political order.

Professor Sircar is generally reliable in matters of detail and in the faithful translation and transliteration of texts, but this is not equally matched by his ability to interpret them historically. To begin with, the present book is called *Political and Administrative Systems of Ancient and Medieval India*, but except for the land revenue system and a few aspects of local government it does not provide us with any substantial information on any other aspect of political and administrative organization of early times. While it is too much to expect any

<sup>\*</sup> A review article based on D.C. Sircar, Studies in the Political and Administrative Systems of Ancient and Medieval India (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1974). Pp. 300. Rs 50.00.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The number of *sāsana* villages in earlier times was so great that many villages even now bear the sāsana in Bihar, Orissa and elsewhere.

adequate or exhaustive study of the subject chosen by the author in a collection of essays, we would certainly expect him to bring out the distinction between the ancient and medieval in the history of the political and administrative system. But to him the terms "ancient" and "medieval" do not carry any meaning. He asserts that "the pattern of the donation of villages in favour of temples does not exhibit any change in the Indian royal documents from the Saka-Sātavāhana age to recent times" (p. 32). He reiterates that "Creation of such holdings in favour of temples, monks, learned Brāhmaṇas, etc., are well known from the Śaka-Sātavāhana age down to recent times" (p.29).

The author shows awareness of the regional variations, but he is not worried by temporal differences. He lumps together as many as 59 obligations imposed on the villagers whose lands were granted to the beneficiaries (pp. 11-2), as if they existed throughout the period of his study. Fortunately the list is not extended to cover the obligations imposed on the villagers in the time of the Delhi Sultanate or the Mughal empire. although this would be a logical corollary to his assertion that the pattern of religious land grants remains unchanged from the beginning of the Christian era to modern times. The list mainly includes land taxes and obligations extending over 1,200 years or so. Mere enumeration of the obligations does not throw any light on the land system or agrarian economy; these have to be carefully analysed, classified and identified in the context of time, place and circumstances. Sircar's exercise is based on the wrong assumption that the pattern of land grants till "recent times" continued to be the same. A voracious reader as he is, he can get a good idea of the changes under the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal emperors if he cares to consult the writings of Moreland and Irfan Habib. Even in earlier times religious (or other) land grants did not follow the same course. No land grants seem to have been made by the Śakas of northern India and the Kusānas. Land grants started with the Sātavāhanas and the Śakas of western India and were first confined to a small area in Maharashtra. Later they spread to Andhra Pradesh and gradually all over the country. In the beginning they covered only plots of land; then taxes from villages with the power to get the land cultivated came within their ambit. From the eighth century A.D. onwards communal rights enjoyed by villages began to be transferred to the beneficiaries, and the transfer of various types of land within the village began to be specified. Finally, in many cases along with the revenues and economic resources of the village its human resources such as peasants, artisans, etc., became the objects of gifts, especially in peripheral and backward areas from which the practice spread to the heartland of the country. The pattern of land grants, therefore, was not the same even from the first to the 12th century A.D., not to speak of the later centuries.

In order to prove continuity of payment to officers in cash and kind, the evidence of Kautilya (third century B.C.?), Manu (second century A.D.), Hsūan Tsang (seventh century A.D.), Kalhana (11th century A.D.), and epigraphs of the 13th century A.D. is all quoted in one paragraph. The relative extent of the mode of payment in one form or the other at a particular point of time is of no consequence to Sircar's argument. It has been shown by the reviewer elsewhere that from the seventh century A.D. remuneration of officers through land grants assumes a significance which it did not attain earlier. Professor Sircar also says: "Of course, early Indian rulers often granted jāgirs for the maintenance

of their officers and dependants" (p.17). He qualifies this by adding that they were not under the feudal type of obligations, but he does not care to indicate their nature.

However, the real issue is not the nature of services and obligations discharged by secular and religious beneficiaries but the fact of their being remunerated through large. scale land grants in post-Gupta times. This fact is haltingly accepted by Professor Sircar. But he also implies payment in cash on a large scale in post-Gupta times by stating that there was always plenty of coins in the market (p.18), although he admits that many of the rulers and ruling families of the early and medieval ages do not appear to have issued coins (p.18). Professor Sircar argues that once the coins entered the market they remained in use for centuries (p.18). A few examples may be cited, but it is difficult to accept the view that the coins issued in earlier times continued to serve the needs of exchange on the same scale for full four hundred years or so. There is little evidence of coins issued by other agencies. The only considerable money issued by goldsmiths and moneyers were imitations of Kusana copper coins, but they seem to have gone out of use after the sixth century A.D. and are not as many as those of the Kuṣāṇas proper. On the whole we have fewer copper coins after the reign of Candra Gupta II, which will indicate much restricted transactions in the internal market.

Much more important for purposes of large-scale overseas trade is the use of gold coins: their use for such purposes is attested by the avadanas belonging to the first three centuries of the Christian era.2 But an examination of the pure gold content of the coins of successive Gupta emperors would show that shortage of gold started right in the fourth century and became acute by the middle of the fifth century A.D. The following chart prepared on the basis of Dr S.K. Maity's book3 is revealing:

Coin type and name of the king	Quanti	ty of pure gold content
The Vāsudeva coins	118	grains
The Candra Gupta I—Kumāradevī coins	109	,,
The Archer, Tiger and Lyrist coins of Samudra Gupta	105-4	,,
The Standard, Battle-axe, Kāca and Aśvamedha		
coins of Samudra Gupta and Archer coins of		
Candra Gupta II	99-8	,,
The Archer coins of Kumāra Gupta I	92	,,
The Archer coins of Skanda Gupta	79-67	,,
The Archer coins of Successors of Narasimha Gupta	73-54	,,

The chart shows that by the beginning of the sixth century the pure gold content of the Gupta coins dwindled down to less than half of the gold coins of the later Kuṣāṇa kings. Except for a very few gold coins of Harsa and Śaśānka in the early seventh century coined

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, Aspects of India's History and Culture (Delhi, 1974), pp. 38-43; especially pp. 42-3.

<sup>3</sup> Feanomic Life of North L. 1997. <sup>3</sup> Economic Life of North India in Gupta Period (Calcutta, 1957), Appendix III, p. 202 and Table I(c) on page 205. on page 205.

money of yellow metal is not to be found. The same is true of silver coins; Gupta silver coins were confined to western India, and we have a few silver coins of Harṣa¹ and of early Kalacuri kings. In fact we cannot identify with confidence any actual coins issued by a Hindu prince of Bengal from the eighth to the 15th century except for a few debased silver and low quality copper coins of the early Pāla kings.² Is this not something unique which has to be accounted for.? Sircar does realize that there was "scarcity" of money (p.18), but he exaggerates the role of cowries in trade transactions, when he says that the shortage was made up by this medium. In spite of references to various types of metallic coins in early medieval texts, the practical absence of gold coins for about 400 years till the beginning of the 11th century and lesser use of the other types of coins is indubitable.³ The fact that much higher rates of interest were charged in early medieval times indicates the shortage of money.⁴ It is also significant that epigraphic instances of the sale and purchase of land are generally lacking for about 400 years after the sixth century. This would again suggest absence of the use of money for this purpose.

My hypothesis regarding the shrinkage of trade and paucity of coins in early medieval times made in 1958<sup>5</sup> is supported by the detailed studies of Professor Lallanji Gopal<sup>6</sup> and Dr B.N.S. Yadava. <sup>7</sup> The work of Professor Upendra Thakur makes it clear that most coin moulds belong to the early centuries of the Christian era and they become practically non-existent in post-Gupta times, <sup>8</sup> although we have one mould which comes from Nalanda in the seventh century. Dr K.K. Thaplyal's examination of the seals shows that impressions of coin-devices on the seals are not available after the Gupta period. <sup>9</sup> What is true of northern India on the basis of these works applies to southern India on the basis of Dr B.D. Chattopadhyaya's study. <sup>10</sup> Even when the gold coins are revived by the Candellakings, these are mere fractions of the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta coins, lacking in substantial purchasing power. But none of the studies including my own, which discuss the scarcity of coins in early medieval times, attempts any quantification, which can lend reality to our hypothesis. Nevertheless as far as we can infer from the finds of coins belonging to the period sixth-10th centuries, the conclusion about their dearth in sharp contrast with the earlier period cannot be ruled out.

Professor K.D. Bajpai informs me that out of 700 coins discovered from Tumain in the district of Guna in Madhya Pradesh about 100 silver coins are inscribed in the character of the seventh century.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Based on H.R. Sanyal's unpublished study of the Pāla coins deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Also see R.S. Sharma, "Coins and Problems of Early Indian Economic History", JNSI, xxxi (1969), 1-8; "Usury in Early Medieval India", Comparative Studies in Society and History, viii (1965), 75.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Origins of Feudalism in India", Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, i (1957-8), 297-328.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The Economic Life of Northern India (Delhi, 1965), pp. 101, 125-34, 159-60; also see chapter IX.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Society and Culture in Northern India in the Twelfth Century (Allahabad, 1973), pp. 270-5, 281-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Mints and Minting in India (Varanasi, 1972) pp., 114-37; cf. pp. 161-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Studies in Ancient Indian Seals (Lucknow, 1972), Appendix C.

<sup>10 &</sup>quot;Coins and Currency System in South India" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1969).

But what does the paucity of coins indicate? Obviously the decline of crafts and commerce. Greek and Latin accounts, profuse references to trade and traders in the avadana literature and Jain Prakrit texts, epigraphic records of cash deposits with guilds of weavers and flour-makers, donative and votive inscriptions of artisans and merchants, and the discoveries of the Roman objects mark out the first four or five centuries of the Christian era as a period of unparalleled commodity production and commerce in ancient India. It was during this period that some of the luxury crafts such as ivory production, glass manufacture, imitation of Roman pottery, etc., mainly confined to towns, reached the peak of excellence. In this period the Indians learnt the art of feeding silk worms on mulberry leaves, which made silk an important item in India's trade with the Roman and Byzantine empires. But in the post-Gupta period organized craft production was on the wane. References to craft villages or craft streets become rare. The guilds of craftsmen and merchants, which played an important part in commodity production in earlier days, became ineffective in the early medieval period. A large number of seals belonging to the nigamas or corporations of craftsmen and merchants, ranging from about the second century B.C. to the fifth century A.D., has been discovered,2 but these seals are "conspicuous by their absence" "in the post-Gupta period".3

International trade through land routes began to decline after the fall of the Kusana. Han and the Arsacid empires in the middle of the third century. Although the Gupta rule meant security to trade till the end of the fifth century or so, the position changed after their fall, for in the middle of the sixth century the Byzantines learnt the art of rearing silk worms which obviated their necessity of trade with India. Even earlier we have an indication of fall in silk production in western India, for in the middle of the fifth century a guild of silk weavers migrated from the Nausari-Broach region, the hinterland of the Gujarat ports, to Mandasor in Malwa where they gave up their old vocation and proliferated into the non-productive occupations of archers, story tellers, religious expounders (teachers), astrologers, warriors, and ascetics.4

A clear downward trend in the shipping activity of the Indians has been noted by several scholars, and the growth of a definite taboo against sea-voyages has been pointed out.5 Loss from the stoppage of trade with the western world and Central Asia was not made up by trade with China and South-East Asia, which, possibly in the third-fourth centuries, supplied gold to India in return for beryl, cotton fabrics and sugar. During the rule of the Wei dynasty (A.D. 220-65) the Chinese learnt from Indians the art of making from the stone coloured glass which could be passed off as beryl. 6 Soon after the sixth century A.D. they learnt cotton cultivation and the manufacture of textiles from Central

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lallanji Gopal, op.cit., pp. 81-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> K.K. Thaplyal, op. cit., pp. 223-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 233.

<sup>4</sup> D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, no. 24, verses 16-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Tan Chung, "Ancient China's Quest for Indian Products", The Sunday Statesman, Magazine Section, 6 April 1969.

Asia and South-East Asia, where it was introduced through Indian contacts.<sup>1</sup> They also learnt the art of making sugar from Magadha in the reign of the Tang Emperor Tai-tsang (A.D. 627-749?).<sup>2</sup> Hence by the seventh century or so China and South-East Asia ceased to depend on India for the supply of sugar and precious stones. This therefore undermined Indian trade in this direction.

Professor Sircar makes much of the missions that passed between India and China (p.19). These missions, religious or otherwise, do not give much indication of trade in early medieval times. The contact, which started in the first century, became considerable in the fifth and reached its peak in the sixth century. From 68 missions from India to China in the sixth century, the number fell down to 15 in the first half of the seventh. It increased to 24 between 710 and 758, and then between 758 and 952 we have no evidence of contact whatsoever. When it revived in 952 only five missions from India to China are recorded between 952 and 996.3 It is rightly held that by the eighth century the most brisk period of India's intercourse with China ended.4 Active intercourse was revived towards the close of the 10th century, but did not last for more than 50 years. Unlike the Roman coins and commodities of the early Christian centuries, neither Chinese goods nor Chinese coins of the period have been discovered on any noticeable scale in India. Only 15 coins representing almost the entire Sung period have been discovered at Tanjore.6 We have Satavahana coins in the period of the Roman trade, but we have no south Indian coins practically up to the end of the 10th century. Special studies hitherto made show that in India's overseas trade with China and South-East Asia in early medieval times first the Persians and then mainly the Arabs acted as middlemen and shippers and netted most of the profits. Although we have ports in other parts of the country, it is significant that in Bengal between the eighth century, after the decline of Tāmralipti, and the 14th century, when the ports of Saptagram and Sonargaon are found to be of considerable importance, there is no reference to any port for sea-borne trade. 7 It is therefore difficult to support the theory of "flourishing internal and external trade" (pp. 19-20) in the early medieval period, at least in circa A.D. 600-1000. What we have in contrast with the earlier period is very limited trade, which could not boost internal crafts and commerce. India did not earn much bullion in this period; on the other hand it may have suffered a drain resulting from the import of horses. 8

That trade fell upon bad days is also evident from the decline of towns. Recent excavations show that from the fourth century A.D. onwards urban sites were in a state of decay

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The statistics are available in H.S. Bhatia and Tan Chung (ed), Legal and Political System in China, i (Pre-1949 period) (New Delhi, 1974), 6-7; cf. pp. 60-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> L. Gopal, op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid. p. 132: For a survey of India's overseas trade with China see ibid. pp. 132-6.

<sup>6</sup> SIS, i, 164, quoted in Lallanji Gopal, op. cit., p. 135,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> I owe this point to Mr H. R. Sanyal.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> L. Gopal, op. cit., p. 160.

and disappearance in northern India, western India, Pakistan, north Afghanistan, and the and disappearance in northern than, neighbouring areas of Tadjkistan and Ujbekistan in the USSR. In Central Asia numerous neighbouring areas of Tadjansten and Silk Road and Kuṣāṇa interest in irrigation and towns, based on the busy traffic jon the Silk Road and Kuṣāṇa interest in irrigation and agriculture, rapidly declined after the end of the Kuṣāṇa power and disappeared by the third century A.D. Archaeological testimony in regard to India is attested by Hsuan Tsang who refers to the decline of Buddhist towns. It seems that towns supplied cloth, oil, salt and iron agricultural implements to villages in return for raw material, foodgrains and cash payment. But now these articles may have been obtained at the hattas or occasional market fairs run by pedlars. Otherwise the needs of peasants were largely supplied by village artisans who in turn were remunerated at each harvest through the supply of foodgrains, Bigger establishments such as those of temples and landed magnates, living on the rent collected from the peasant tenants, obtained the services of artisans through land grants which encroached on their full-time trades and thus further weakened commodity production. Therefore the largely self-sufficient economy took shape in this period.2

The decline of crafts and commerce is also indicated by the changing meaning of certain technical terms which formed part of the vocabulary of this branch of economic activity. In earlier texts sernī stood for a guild of artisans or petty traders belonging to different castes, but in medieval works the term srent in astadasasreni became synonymous with jāti or hīnajāti or varna or prakrti, indicating immobile, hereditary castes half of whom were clearly condemned to the status of untouchables. The term nigama, which stood for trade, traffic, market town or corporation of artisans and traders in earlier times, came to indicate in medieval times a village. 4 Its meaning first underwent change in the Amarakośa, in which it came to signify a suburb of the town,5 although in the Pāli texts it primarily meant a town as opposed to gama and janapada. Both the terms srent and nigama have been discussed by Professor Sircar without taking account of their changing import because of altered situations. We may note that the meaning of the term vithi seems also to have undergone some change. In Pāli and ancient Sanskrit works the term was used to indicate rows of stalls and streets mainly connected with shops and artisans, but in inscriptions of the fifth century it signified the smallest rural, fiscal and administrative unit comprising a group of

<sup>1</sup> R.S. Sharma, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and Post-Gupta Times", JIH, Golden Jubilee Volume (1973), pp. 135-50.

<sup>2</sup> It survives in an attenuated form in comparatively less accessible villages of northern India as the bhattāī, jajmānī, kamailī, kārā, nīkarāū, sep or virit systems. Recently it has been popularized by some social anthropologists as the jajmānī system, but the term is applicable only to the relation of priest and barbers, both of them being non productive section is applicable only to the relation of priests. and barbers, both of them being non-productive sections, with the peasant client.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> L. Gopal, op. cit., pp. 82-3; B.N.S. Yadava, op. cit., p. 42; p. 96, fns. 463. 464.

Dvisandhāna Mahākāvya of Mahākavi Dhanañjaya, ed, K.C. Gorawala (Delhi, 1970), IV. 46; by some scholars the text is placed in the eighth century and by others between 996 and 1147. Its commentary, the Padakaumudī Tikā by Nemicandro Gartis and by others between 46 and 1147. Its commentary, and by others between 46 and 1147. Its commentary the Padakaumudī Tikā by Nemicandro Gartis and by others between 46 and 1147. the Padakaumudī Tikā by Nemicandra Sāstrī, explains nigama in IV. 46 as bhaktagrāma. Also set Vīranandī's Candraprabhacarita Mahākāuya (about 13th century) I. 19 and II.123; the description of the Videamara in this text answers, that of a village was a set of the Videamara. nigama in this text answers that of a village; nigama is called a grāma in the comment of the Vidrama novallabhā (16th century) on these two passages. I owe all this information to Mr Mohan Chand, Lecturer in Sanskrit, Ramjas College, Delhi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> II.1.1. I owe this reference to Professor R.C. Pandeya.

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villages; in literary texts it also meant art gallery. Similarly the term sārthavāha, which stood for the leader of the trade caravan in earlier texts, came to mean in medieval texts village headman or head of the assemblage of the people collected on the occasion of village festivities. Finally, the term vaidehaka or vaideha (literally an inhabitant of Videha), which was used in the sense of trader in ancient texts² became synonymous with an untouchable in early medieval times. The vaidehaka is described as the son of a vaiśya from a brāhmanī by Kautilya. But in the Gupta period there is some change in his position. The Amarakośa places him in both the vaiśya-varga⁴ and śūdra-varga. In Manu he is called untouchable or bāhya, bracketed with the caṇḍāla, and considered to be the source of the origin of several reprehensible mixed castes. All this is found in the 10th chapter of Manu, which deals with more than 60 mixed castes, and probably belongs to the fifth century or even later. In any case Manu's medieval commentators are in no doubt that the bāhyas were outside the fourfold varna system. 8

The practice of large-scale land grants in early medieval times can therefore be better appreciated against the background of the decline of trade and petty commodity production demonstrated by a strikingly lesser use of metallic money and languishing of urban centres. In this perspective the agrarian and administrative structure dominated by landed intermediaries may be called feudal. Professor Sircar questions the use of the term "feudalism" in describing the system, but his frequent use of the term "fief" (incidentally this does not find place in his index) and jagir relating to "ancient" India certainly points to an important feudal trait, which can be brushed aside only on the basis of his understanding of feudalism drawn from Hallam's Middle Ages or Encyclopaedia Britannica. The essence of Indian feudalism, as shown elsewhere by me, consists in the gross unequal distribution of land or its produce leading to the emergence of a hierarchy of landed magnates between the king and the actual tillers who are reduced to the position of semi-serfs as a result of numerous impositions made on them. Professor Sircar shows awareness of the rise of landed intermediaries except that he would describe feudal magnates as landlords, and feudalism as landlordism. Though this semantic difference is confusing, it does not much affect our understanding of early medieval society so long as the emergence of landed intermediaries and the concomitant changes in the position of the peasants are borne in mind. Sircar refers to the creation of three categories of "landlords": "(a) those who enjoyed complete freedom from taxes and obligations, (2) those whose estates were partially exempted from obligations and (who)9 paid a nominal tax, and (3) those who were not

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> L. Gopal, op. cit., pp. 103-4.

<sup>2</sup> Kauțilya's Arthasāstra, II.1.

<sup>3</sup> AŚ, II.7.

<sup>4</sup> II.9.78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> II.10.1-4.

<sup>6</sup> X.25-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> On this problem I have written something for the revised edition of my Śūdras in Ancient India.

<sup>8</sup> Medhātithi, Govindarāja and Kullūka on Manu, X. 29-31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> My addition.

exempted from obligations" (p.10). But it has to be stressed that the "landlord" did not possess absolute right in the land as was the case with the landlords created by the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis. Subject to royal rights, the "landlords" created by the charters certainly enjoyed superior rights in the land at the cost of the cultivating peasants, whose position was admittedly depressed by the "heavy" (p.10) burden of taxes indiscriminately enumerated by Professor Sircar.1

It is not our contention that all peasants had become serfs and that serfdom was a common trait of the Indian agrarian system in medieval times, but at the same time the literary (both foreign and Indian) and epigraphic testimony regarding the attachment of peasants, artisans and even (small) merchants to the villages granted to beneficiaries cannot be questioned. Although it is repeatedly stated by a Chinese account of A.D. 732 that the village folk or inhabitants were transferred along with the village lands to the Buddhist monasteries, Sircar regards it a half-truth on the ground that plots of land and cash deposits were donated to the monasteries (p. 28), little realizing that this was done about seven centuries earlier when land grants had just started in Maharashtra and the use of metallic coin under the Sātavāhanas was widespread. To him the eighth century Chinese account implies that the "lower class of tenants (such as temporary tenants) in such holdings had to offer visti or unpaid labour to the master" (p.29). Even if we accept this inference, how could these tenant cultivators be compelled to work unless it was ensured that they would continue to live in the donated villages?

Sircar is naturally not satisfied with the only reference to serfdom in the Upamilibhavaprapañcakathā of Siddharsi (A.D. 906) produced by L. Gopal,<sup>2</sup> and, apparently not expecting any other reference, asks for more. Quite a few are cited from early medieval texts by Dr B. N. S. Yadava in his book Society and Culture in Northern India in the Twelfth Century3 and in a recent article of his. These references are found in the Skanda Purāṇa, the commentary of Medhātithi on Manu, the Brhannāradiya Purāna, and Laksmīdhara's quotation from Āpastamba in the Vyavahārakānda of his Krtyakalpataru. 5 Some of the terms used in these texts for forcing cultivating tenants to stick to the soil or to their work are revealing. These are pratibandhena yojitāh (tied down to the village-grant) and baddha-hālaih (men attached to the plough). The texts prescribe danda-tadanam or beating with stick and avarodhanam or confining for these ploughmen and dependent peasants who leave the agricultural work on the lands of their masters and run away.6

The author, who is otherwise so careful about every bit of the contents of inscriptions, lightly dismisses the land grant terms specifically mentioning the transfer of certain classes

<sup>1</sup> Incidentally no distinction is made by him between "revenue" and "rent"; the former belongs to the state and the latter to the intermediary.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Quasi-Manorial Rights in Ancient India", JESHO, vi (1963), 296.

<sup>4 &</sup>quot;Immobility and Subjection of Indian Peasantry in Early Medieval Complex", IHR, i, no. 1, 18-27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The references are found in his book and article cited above,

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

of village people to the beneficiaries. To him granting a village and granting the village together with the villagers really mean the same thing (p.22); in other words the clear mention of the transfer of artisans, peasants, merchants and other inhabitants (sa-kāru-karṣaka-vaṇig-vāstavya) along with the village in the Candella grants is redundant. If that is so why are these categories of rural population specified? This expression is not a conventional part of the land charter such as the imprecatory verses; then why is it especially incised on the copper-plate?

The author then shifts the ground by supporting the view that in the land charters of the Bhauma-Karas of Orissa the specific mention of the transfer of weavers, milkmen. vintners, etc., signified the transfer to the beneficiaries of the revenue income from these artisans, which was a state monopoly (p.23). But then what about the transfer of cultivators in the Candella charters? The fact that only the transfer of artisans and herdsmen is mentioned in the Orissa charters and not that of cultivators shows the scarcity of the former in that region. After all Professor Sircar himself enumerates 58 fiscal terms, most of which stand for taxes to be levied from peasants. If the idea was to transfer the taxes from artisans, then why was it necessary to mention separately in the charters the transfer of taxpayers? The only valid and obvious explanation is that in the type of the closed economy that was developing in the early medieval period it was found necessary, especially in backward areas, to compel artisans and peasants, who constituted the essential human resources for the running of economy, to stick to the soil or the village, so that they could produce the surplus for paying the taxes due to beneficiaries. This fact is also clearly brought out by the two forged seventh century land grants attributed to Samudra Gupta. It is significant that craft villages, mentioned in ancient texts, are rarely recorded in early medieval inscriptions.2 These generally refer to villages which were composed of both peasants and artisans. Medieval sources emphasize the definition of village as consisting of both peasants and artisans,3 and we have a village called Brhat-Chattivannī, a large rural settlement consisting of 36 "varnas", in a 10th century record of Bengal.4 In such villages peasants and artisans met each other's needs, and in this sense were mutually dependent. Both of them had to meet the demands of the intermediate beneficiaries or the ruler, wherever necessary, through administrative compulsion. In fact even without compulsion peasants and artisans had no option but to stick to the village, for the set-up being the same everywhere, migration to another village could not materially change the situation. Till recent times the survival of the old practice has been noticed. Scarcity of artisans has led to violent quarrels between the dominant peasant caste of one village and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Binayak Misra, Orissa under the Bhauma Kings (Calcutta, 1934), p. 95; in the translation of the passage sa-tantwāya-gokuṭala-sauṇḍhidik=ādi prakṛtikah, sa is taken in the sense of income from these categories by Misra, but in one case he equates sa with "with" (Ibid. p. 39).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B.N.S. Yadava, Society and Culture in Northern India, p. 267. A craft village called Kumbhārapadraka is mentioned in a copper-plate inscription of Śaśāñka, JRASB, Letters, xi (1945), 1-9, Plate II, line 10. But such examples are rarely found in subsequent centuries till circa A.D. 1200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 96, fn. 464; p. 97, fn. 466; p. 267.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> El, xxii (1933-4), no. 25, line 21. Chatiannā or Chataunā is a common village name in Bihar and castern UP.

that of the other for their possession; sometimes the artisans who wanted to flee the village

The real issue in this discussion is not the beneficiary's control over the persons of artisans and peasants, as has been supposed by Professor Sircar, but the mechanism adopted for enforcing that control through their attachment to the soil or even to service grants. Those who were attached to temples through service grants are called slaves by him, but should be really treated as semi-serfs. Slaves are usually an item of property, which can be sold and purchased, and they hardly possess any property themselves. But in the cases cited by Sircar artisans do possess some rights in land. They had to be tied not only to villages or groups of villages but also to new temple households. It was also essential to attach even small merchants to the village in order to keep the village economy going.

As regards big merchants, they were being feudalized in the same manner by grant of charters as was the case with temples, priests and officials. At two different places in the book (pp. 176-98; pp. 275-82) Sircar talks of privileges granted to merchants. But their significance can be understood only against a correct appreciation of the nature of the prevailing economy. The inscriptions recording concessions to merchants are correctly called "Indian Feudal Trade Charters" by D.D. Kosambi, whose contribution made 15 years ago has escaped this study.

What has been stated here in response to the points raised by Professor Sircar is not the final word on Indian feudalism. For the period A.D. 600-1000 we need detailed studies of agrarian economy, trade and handicrafts, currency system, and the role of towns, on regional basis. For the later period it may be necessary to explain the long continuity of the closed economy under the feudal set-up and the stages through which this economy began to erode. Meanwhile we must express our sense of gratitude to Professor Sircar for having shown sustained interest in the problem in his recent writings,2 including the one reviewed here. In his age group he is one of the few scholars who are alive to the newer issues raised in early Indian history. His criticisms may sound harsh and blunt, but they are always competent, scholarly and informative.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> JIH, xliv (1966), 351-7; li (1973), 456-9; Journal of Ancient Indian History, vi (1972-3), 337-9; D.C. Sircar (ed), Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India (University of Calcutta, 1966), 11-23; D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy in Ancient and Malicula II. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy in Ancient and Medieval India as Revealed by Epigraphic Records (University of Lucknow, 1969), pp. 32-48 of Lucknow, 1969), pp. 32-48.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

R. N. SALETORE, Early Indian Economic History (N. M. Tripathi Private Limited, Bombay, 1973). Pp. xvii+859. Rs 50.00.

In the last two decades the vogue for economic history has increased tremendously in India. To understand any change or development in society, religion, art or politics investigators try to determine the economic factors or background shaping it. Opinions vary about the scope of economic history. Some scholars discuss the extent to which economic factors influence developments in other spheres of activity and in turn are conditioned by other factors. Others prefer to confine their study to purely economic activities. In respect of the economic history of ancient India there is a constant danger that it may become only a collection of loosely connected pieces of information. It is necessary to present information in a meaningful manner, as answers to significant questions or problems of economic life. The historian must constantly endeavour to mark out changes wherever possible; otherwise there is a monotonous repetition of similar or identical information in different periods. The present publication may, however, disappoint readers who approach it with the expectation to find economic history in it.

In the opening chapter the author describes the geographical background and shows how economic life has been influenced by flora and fauna, mineral wealth, roads and climate. He goes on to show how climate determines the nature and character of people in different regions, but does not refer to questions of greater relevance, for example, economic geography and population, of course within the limitations of the available sources.

The second chapter concerns external commercial contacts. The author analyses the early contacts with the Babylonians, Egyptians, Mitannis, Hittites, Assyrians, Sumerians and Phoenicians. A chronological order is followed in describing the contacts with the later political centres in the west, Persia, Greece, Bactria, Parthia and Rome. The contacts with Far East (including South-East Asia), with particular reference to China and Seres, are also discussed. The author regards the Seres as having been a people of Chinese origin living in north-western China adjacent to Tibet and Chinese Tartary and traces the antiquity of the Indo-Seric contact to the fourth century B.C. He supports his view by interpreting the term seraka in the Arthaśāstra (II, 17, 13) as a type of skin from the Serike country. The passage in question is very clear. Seraka refers to an animal and not to a type of skin. It appears in this list of animals after godhr and may stand for sīraka meaning a porpoise or white-skinned godhā, as pointed out by Ganapati Sastri in his commentary.

Beginning with a statement of the policy of import on the testimony of Kautilya, Megasthenes and the inscription of Visnusena, chapter III lists the commodities imported into the country. These items are classified under the heads aromatics, ointments and unguents, medicinal plants and roots, metals, minerals, mineral by-products, precious stones, live-stock, skins and hides and consumable commodities like wines and dates. It is a useful chapter which contains rich information about the commodities, their nature, use, place of origin and trade. The author, however, inserts information which could have been omitted without affecting in the least the central theme of the chapter. To illustrate, we

may refer to pages 103-4 (public welfare and wealth), 154-5 (Indian glass) and 168-9 (state

The treatment of exports in chapter IV is on the lines followed in the preceding chapter. The commodities are classified under the headings forest-produce, dyes, consumer goods (including foodgrains, live-stock, spices and aromatics, unguents and scents and other vegetable products), metals, minerals and precious stones and textiles. At the end the author analyses the economic consequences of Indian exports on the Roman empire, but ignores the more relevant question of the economic implications of the exports for India. He takes Kautilya's allusion to the cīnapatṭa of Chinese origin (cīnapaṭṭāśca cīnabhāmijā, Arthaśāstra, II, 11, 114) to suggest that the silk route existed from the fourth century B.C. Some pieces of information in this chapter could have been utilized for a separate chapter on industries.

The next two chapters (V and VI) discuss the sea-routes and land-routes both inside and outside the country's frontiers. The author collects substantial evidence regarding the routes in different periods. In chapter VI he also discusses the problem of public safety on roads. We feel that in these chapters the means of transport, including ships, and the role of the ports and traders and their organizations engaged in transport should have been discussed.

In chapter VII the author discusses all types of markets within the country and also the overseas markets with which India had commercial relations. He determines the location and role of the important market towns of the period. However, he fails to take any notice of the very useful information in Jain texts about different types of markets or centres of trade, for example, jalapattana, sthalapattana, dronamukha, nigama, nivesa and putabhedana. The questions of the fixation of prices and their regulation and control by different agencies, especially the state, are also discussed in the chapter. If short of space(?), the author could have omitted or summarized the account of the overseas markets and touched questions more intimately connected with early Indian economics, as for example, weights and measures and types or categories of merchants and traders.

In chapter VIII the author discusses in detail the evidence relating to the ownership of land and connected questions of sale, purchase and mortgage. The laws relating to escheat, confiscation and treasure-trove have been analysed. Some important land-tenures mentioned in the epigraphic records are also discussed. The land measures are analysed in connection with the survey of land. The author does not discuss "the agricultural tax structure as that would not strictly fall within the scope of this study" (p.515) and confines his account to the assessment and rate of revenue. We fail to see the necessity of this strict approach in the present case when the author is throughout the book very liberal in discussing problems of little direct significance to the theme under discussion. The agricultural problems chosen by him concern the land system. Problems relating to the technique of agriculture, including the nature and extent of the use of manure and irrigation, have been ignored.

To prove the existence of private ownership of land Dr Saletore cites references to a landowner, landed proprietor or village proprietor in early Pāli texts and the Jatākas on

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the basis of the term kutumbika (p. 462), but he nowhere shows how this meaning of the term is confirmed. Likewise he takes references to kammāragāma, mahāvaddhakigāma. mahācandālagāma and brāhmanagāma to imply collective ownership of land (Ibid). These villages were inhabited predominantly by people of the caste or profession mentioned; to us there is nothing to imply collective ownership of land. The author dismisses Megasthenes' remarks about land ownership in India as emanating from an observer "little used to accurate investigations" (p. 466) of matters, but does not take cognizance of the interpretation offered by U.N. Ghoshal (Contributions to the History of Hindu Revenue System, Calcutta, 1929, pp. 167-70). The two new types of land tenures, prakrtayah dharma and dharma-ksayaasankayā, mentioned by him (pp. 496-7) result from a very superficial analysis of the references and involve a gross injustice to the rules of the formation of words in Sanskrit language. The author refers to nīvī dharma, akṣayanīvī dharma and apradākṣayanīvī dharma as three different types of tenure (pp. 497-500), but does not consider the possibility that the last was the fuller form of the tenure which was often mentioned in shorter important term in the form is nīvī. On the analogy of sacred deposit called nīvī these grants could not be disturbed by but the donee had the right to enjoy in perpetuity the proceeds from them. The expressions aprada and aksaya were prefixed to make the nature of the tenure more explicit (the explanation of aprada as aprahata or land not given to anyone else before is without any sanction). As in the case of a grant used by the author, the conditions of the fuller form are stated even though the terms in the shorter form do not imply them (apradā dharmena tāmrapattīkrtya...apradā dharmena bhagavate śvetavarāha-svāmine šāśvatkālabhogyā; E.I., xv, no. 7 (5), 143 is wrongly mentioned as a grant of Budhagupta of the G.E. 214, i.e., A.D. 533-4 on pages 499-500. The date is 224 but the name of the Gupta king is not decipherable; in any case it could not have been Budhagupta). This interpretation of apradāksayanīvī seems to be supported by a grant of the reign of Kumāragupta in which the grant of land is made only by destroying the condition of apradakṣayanīvī (nontransferability and enjoyment in perpetuity; the date of E.I., xv, no. 7 (1), 133 is G.E. 128 and not G.E. 129, as suggested on page 500). The author does not adduce relevant evidence for the tenure tribhoga dharma (p. 500). His interpretation of bhamicchidranyaya as "a type of tenure by which virgin, fallow and cultivable land was brought under cultivation but its transfer or ownership was made permissible in certain cases" (p. 502) is not convincing and leaves the nature of the tenure still doubtful.

The author traces (p. 507) the origin of the later linear measure nala to the time-unit  $n\bar{a}lik\bar{a}$  mentioned by Kautilya, but it would be better to connect it with  $n\bar{a}lik\bar{a}$ , a linear measure mentioned in the same chapter of the Arthaśāstra (II,20,18). The author himself refers to this usage of  $n\bar{a}lik\bar{a}$  (p. 510). We cannot agree with his view that the continued use of the measures rajju, danda and nivartana long after Kautilya accounts for his enduring influence down to the 18th century (p. 507). Likewise the author deduces from the designation of the officer rajjuka (translated by him variously as surveyor and settlement officer, p. 507) that the measure rajju appearing in the Arthaśāstra was in use in later periods. Rajju in rajjuka may not refer to a land measure, but to rope used by the officer for his duties of measurement. We fail to understand the meaning of such sentences as this: "Next to the

rājamāna measure by which generally the nivartana was measured, the nivartana was the most popular among the land measures in ancient Karnāṭaka" (p. 508). It may be pointed out that these were not two different measures. Rājamāna may refer to the royal attempt at standardization in view of the baffling local variation in the area signified by a nivartana, (Incidentally the author mentions references to nivartana in the inscriptions of the Pallavas, Eastern Cālukyas, Kadambas and Rāṣṭrakūṭas only without specifying the reason for omitting other dynasties or regions). The discussion on the hala measure (pp. 512-4) contains several inaccuracies of facts and interpretation. Manu, VII, 119, does not make observations about ploughs, but refers to the assignments to officers in charge of different administrative divisions. Kullūka (or Hārīta quoted by him) does not mention four types of ploughs of different size. Hārīta refers to ploughs with eight, six, four or three bullocks, The advice for a larger number of bullocks emanated from a feeling of compassion for the bullocks. Of the four types inferred by Dr Saletore (dharmahala, madhyamahala grhasthahala and brahmahala) only dharmahala appears in Hārīta, not as the term for a type of plough but as an adjective for astagavam. When Kullūka calls sadgavam as madhyamam halam, he does not refer to the size of the plough, but uses an adjective following the criterion laid down by Hārīta. The author names the fourth type as brahmahala or brāhmana plough. The original expression is trigavam brahmaghātinām, implying that people who yoke only three bullocks to the plough incur the sin of murdering a brahmana. The sentence "The bhikkehala must have been utilised in cultivating Sangha lands" at the end of the last but one paragraph on page 519 should have come at the end of the second paragraph on page 514.

The ninth chapter is on corporate organization. The author claims to have discussed the various problems connected with different guilds and corporations in a chronological order. He starts with the beginnings of corporate organization citing the evidence of the epics. This is followed by an account of the guilds in the Vedic literature in which the author discusses the references to grāmanī also. We do not agree with his view that the "expression gana came to be also known to represent only a guild" (p. 523). While referring to the ayudhajīvisanghas (mentioned as Ayudhajīvini Sanghas, pp. 524,525) Dr Saletore abruptly remarks that the "Yaudheyas continued to remain a prominent power in the country for a long time later" (p. 525). His justification seems to be that "Pāṇini has named them both as a sangha and a gana" (Ibid). The reference cited is V, 3,117, which reads āyudhajīvisanghāt-svārthe an. Elsewhere also in the Aṣṭādhyāyī (V, 3,114-9; IV, 1,178) there is no reference to the Yaudheyas as a gana and the author takes gana to represent a guild or a corporation and the sangha to signify an association with republican features. The Apannaka Jātaka describes the activities of a caravan, but the author utilizes this narrative also for presenting an account of the guilds in the sixth and seventh centuires B.C. (p. 527). In his zeal for describing the guild in the fourth century B.C. he presses into service all sorts of references in the Arthasāstra, even those where the guilds are mentioned neither directly nor indirectly. Thus although there is no mention of merchant guilds in this text, which simply refers to partnership among cultivators (karṣaka) and traders (vaidehaka) original expression is samvyavahārika. It stands for a dealer, a trader. The context (III, 12, 25-30) shows that a context 25-30) shows that a concession was given by the king to those among the samvyavahārikas

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who were trustworthy and free from blame, whereas the earlier rules were applicable to the ordinary people of that category. The text provides for the division of fees among the sacrificial priests (III, 14, 28-36) without suggesting that they were organized into guilds. Likewise it recognizes the association of workmen (samghabhrtāh, III, 14, 12-8), but does not mention the occupations or professions so organized. Elsewhere the text stipulates that the artisans ( $k\bar{a}rus$ ) should accept entrusted material with the guarantee of the guild (srenipramānāh, IV, 1, 2-3); here also the required list is not available. The author takes all the occupations referred to in this chapter as having their guilds. This chapter on "keeping a watch over artisans" (kārukarakṣaṇam) in the book on "the suppression of criminals" (kantakasodhanam) is meant to help the king prevent thieves who are not known as thieves, such as traders (vanik), actors (kuśilava), mendicants (bhiksuka), jugglers (kuhaka) and others, from oppressing the people (IV, 1, 65). The Arthasāstra collects here useful information about working of a few professions and lays down fines for different types of cheating. The professions mentioned in the chapter are those of weavers (tantuvāya), washermen (rajaka), tailors, goldsmiths (suvarnakāra), examiners of coins (rapadaršaka), attendants (caraka) and dust-washers (pāmsudhāvaka), physicians (bhisaj), actors, wandering minstrels (carana) and mendicants. It is clear from the chapter that unless specifically referred to the existence of guilds of all the professions mentioned above cannot be inferred; from the text we can be sure only of the artisans having their guilds. Dr Saletore prepares an account of the type of work done by these guilds and the state control over them, though in the text there is nothing specific about guilds, the narrative being meant to cover people in these professions in general. He stretches imagination too far when he argues that because in the Arthaśāstra (II, 1, 32) we have a reference to a corporation (saṅgha) and an association with agreement (samayānubandha), actors (nata), professional storytellers (vāgjīvana) or minstrels (kuśīlava) mentioned in II, 1, 34 were organized into guilds. The text does not show any inseparable and direct connection between the two passages to suggest that the professions fell under the category of sanghas. It is not clear what type of corporation the author envisages when under miscellaneous corporations he mentions the chiefs of elephants (p. 542). The passage in the Arthasāstra (V, 3, 9) lays down the salary of the hastyaśvarathamukhyas along with that of the śrenīmukhyas. The latter were most likely the chiefs of the soldiers' guild, but the use of the same term mukhya does not prove the existence of similar guilds of elephants, horses and chariots because of the obvious absurdity. The author has not discussed the evidence of the Divyāvadāna pertaining to the judicial functions of the guilds. The Mandasore inscription provides a very interesting testimony to the mobility of the guilds. In this chapter the evidence of the Vaisali seals should have received a more detailed treatment. The author also discusses the problem of labour and wages in this chapter. He emphasizes forced, voluntary and hired types of labour with the result that slave labour has not been discussed properly.

The last chapter concerns currency, exchange and banking practices. The author discusses the beginning of the currency system, types of currency and how they were regulated. He analyses the nature and medium of exchange and determines the extent to which barter prevailed in commercial transactions. Under banking practices he emphasizes the question of interest and its types, depo sits and pledges. He, however, does

not give due importance to the study of the actual specimens of coins. Thus in determining the date of the introduction of a currency system he does not make a proper use of the testimony of archaeological excavations. Recently much work has been done on early Indian coins and their economic implications and an attempt should have been made to establish correlation between the coins mentioned in the ancient sources and the actual coins of those times. The evidence regarding the purchasing power of coins collected by the author being in terms of traditional coin denominations whose precise significance or value has not been determined does not convey much meaning to the modern reader.

The book has a wide coverage and the author has attempted an exhaustive, almost encyclopaedic, treatment. In the foregoing paragraphs we have referred only to the typical errors and the placing of sections in a wrong context. The order of the chapters itself (one on geographical background being followed by six on trade and commerce, two on land and agriculture and corporate organization and one on currency, exchange and banking) does not follow a scheme in terms of economic activities. Dr Saletore's wide range of scholarship is reflected in the Babylonian, Greek, Roman or Chinese parallels for Indian practices that he has provided at several places but one may legitimately question the rationale of the method when a little known fact is sought to be explained by an equally little, if not less, known fact from the past of a foreign country and when the comparisons fail to provide clues to possible borrowings and influences.

Several mistakes remain uncorrected in this voluminous work. Diacritical marks have been indiscriminately and carelessly used. We refrain from giving examples, because even the most modest list will be embarrassingly long. The same is the case with spellings. To illustrate, Āryaśūra appears as Ārya Sūtra (p. 817), Bilhana as Bhilana (Ibid), Viśākhadatta as Viśākadatta (p. 819) and Bṛhajjātaka as Bṛhatkathā Jātaka (Ibid).

Dr Saletore claims to have given only a select bibliography. We realize that it is very difficult to compile even a near exhaustive list of useful articles on the subject in the standard research journals. But the works of Aśvaghosa and such original texts as the Amarakośa, the Mahāvastu and the Divyāvadāna, which have many useful references, should have been mentioned. The author lists Susruta, but omits Caraka. The bibliography creates the impression that the Jain sources have not received proper attention. Only the Prabandhacintamani and the Samaraiccakaha, both belonging to later period, have been listed, but no Jain text composed before the eighth century seems to have been tapped. Dr Saletore has taken pains to prepare an impressive list of modern works some of which are outside the geographical and chronological limits of his study. Hence it is strange that several studies having direct bearing on the subject escaped his attention. We would like to make a pointed reference to H. Chakravarti, Trade and Commerce of Ancient India (Calcutta, 1966), D.R. Chanana, Slavery in Ancient India (New Delhi, 1960), H. Chatterji, The Law of Debt in Ancient India (Calcutta, 1972), A.K. Choudhary, Early Medieval Village in North-Eastern India (Calcutta, 1971), P.C. Jain, Labour in Ancient India (New Delhi, 1971), D.N. Jha, Revenue System in post-Maurya and Gupta Times (Calcutta, 1967), N. N. Kher, Agrarian and Fiscal Economy in Mauryan and host Mauryan Ace (D. W. 1967). and post-Mauryan Age (Delhi, 1973), D.D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the Study of Indian History (Bombay, 1956) and The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline (London, 1965), B.S. Mudgal, Political Economy in Ancient India (Kanpur, 1960), Motichandra, Sartha-

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vāha (Patna, 1953), M. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World. iii (Oxford, 1941), K.T. Shah, Ancient Foundations of Economics in India (Bombay, 1954), R.S. Sharma, Economic Aspects of the Caste System in Ancient India (Patna, 1952). (Tatha, 1952), Sadras in Ancient India (Delhi, 1958), Indian Feudalism (Calcutta, 1965), Light on Early Indian Society and Economy (Bombay, 1966) and (ed), Land Revenue in Indian Historical Studies (Delhi, 1971), D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy in Ancient and Medieval India as revealed by Epigraphical Records (Lucknow, 1969) and (ed), Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India (Calcutta, 1966), B. Srivastava, Trade and Commerce in Ancient India (Varanasi, 1968) and L.S. Sternbach, Juridical Studies in Ancient Indian Law, i-ii (Delhi, 1965-7).

In using the Mahābhārata evidence the author is aware of the importance of the Poona critical edition (p. 603). But in the case of the Indika of Megasthenes and the Arthasastra of Kautilya, though they are among his main sources, he does not recognize that there are textual problems relating to stratigraphy and chronology. He does not take any notice of what R.C. Majumdar (Classical Accounts of India, Calcutta, 1960) says about the historical propriety of ascribing to Megasthenes all the fragments pieced together by McCrindle following Schwanbeck. How the author ignored the scholarly volumes of R.P. Kangle's The Kauțiliya Arthaśāstra (pts i-iii, Bombay, 1960-5) is not understandable. He should also have referred to the computer studies of T.R. Trautman (Kautilya and the Arthasāstra: A Statistical Investigation of the Authorship and Evolution of the Text, Leiden, 1971) who has confirmed three layers in the text.

It has, however, to be admitted that the author has presented a rich collection of information on several aspects of economic life and the legal aspects of land system, guilds, currency and banking have been discussed in great detail in the work, which will be quite useful to students and scholars. We wish the narrative had been compressed to avoid irrelevant details and the evidence pressed to yield more meaningful information for the early

Indian economic history.

BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY VARANASI

LALLANII GOPAL

N. N. KHER, Agrarian and Fiscal Economy in the Mauryan and post-Mauryan Age (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1973). Pp.xxv+468. Rs 50.00.

As early as 1930 Marc Bloch observed in the context of the French agrarian history, "there are moments in the development of a subject when a synthesis, however premature it may appear, can contribute more than a host of analytical studies". Whether or not we have reached this stage in early Indian economic historiography may be debatable. But the present work by N.N. Kher does not fall under either of the two categories.

The book under review deals with the land system, agronomy and the fiscal economy during Maurya and post-Maurya times. Abounding in slipshod sentences, faulty use of italics and apparently impressive, though often superficial, footnotes, it consists of 29

chapters and three appendices, the last of which summarizes the results of the study. Originally a doctoral thesis submitted to the Vishvabharati University in 1964, it has been rushed through the press without necessary revision and updating, as is evident from the bibliography which does not mention the significant writings on the subject produced during recent years.

Based on literary and epigraphic material already utilized by many scholars, the work provides adequate evidence of the author's inadequate ability to critically analyse the sources and to examine their possible applicability to the period of study. Thus Dr Kher has unreservedly accepted the complete text of the Arthasāstra as a composition by Kauṭilya and truly reflecting the conditions under the Mauryas, though two years before the publication of his work Trautman's statistical analysis convincingly proved the text to be a compilation by at least three hands. The evidence of the Jātakas and the Buddhist Avadānas has been used with scant attention to its historicity and chronology. Passages from the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa have been cited in support of the material drawn from other sources without recognizing the existence of several chronological strata in them. Similarly the legal texts have not been presented in their perspective; nor has the idealized picture available from them been modified in the light of epigraphic and other contemporary sources.

Dr Kher's unwillingness to discuss the credibility of the sources has reduced his work to the level of a mere inventory of disparate facts gathered from different sources often mutually unrelated in their historical context. This also accounts for his failure to come to grips with the problems which may be germane to the study of early Indian socio-economic history. On the basis of references culled from literature and inscriptions he has shown the existence of multilateral ownership of land (pp. 20-96). But the extent to which the growth of private property in land may have been inhibited by the state and the village community has not been discussed; nor have the possible changes in the landownership pattern received attention. The seven chapters on agronomy (pp. 95-237) uncritically lump together mainly literary references to various aspects of agricultural production and organization to the almost total exclusion of an analysis of technology. Various classes of agricultural workers (for example, landless labour, slaves, wage-earners and hired labourers), their wages and service conditions, to the extent they are known from the literary writings, find a place in the book. But too much seems to have been made of the legal precepts supposedly intended to ameliorate their condition. The role of slave (involuntary?) and free labour in the Maurya and post-Maurya economy has not been examined at all. In the absence of any effort to distinguish the different categories of agrestic labour, their status picture inevitably remains murky and the problem of characterizing early Indian society remains unsolved. The treatment of the fiscal economy is old-fashioned and the sections (chapters XVII-XXIX) devoted to it are hardly an improvement on U.N. Ghoshal's work published as early as 1929. Dr Kher asserts that the principles of taxation enunciated in ancient Indian texts "resemble in character the canons propounded by Adam Smith, Mill, Pigou and others"—a view refuted by the present reviewer elsewhere several years ago.

Nationalist, revivalist and pedestrian in approach, N.N. Kher is not aware of the crucial problems of the current Indian historiography, let alone of their solution. Not

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surprisingly he has failed to comprehend and investigate the basic historical forces at work during the three centuries before and after Christ. Laudatory remarks by several scholars printed on the blurb are grossly misleading. Lacking in perspective and deficient in an intelligent discussion of the subject, the work is at best a good exmple of how not to write the economic history of early India.

PATNA UNIVERSITY
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D. N. JHA

MD. AQUIQUE, Economic History of Mithila (c. 600 B.C.-1097 A. D.) (Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1974).

Pp. xvi+225. Rs 30.00.

A welcome development in the field of historical research in recent years has been the appearance of fairly detailed regional histories, the need and usefulness of which can hardly be exaggerated. Although the period covered in the book, which substantially represents the author's Ph.D. thesis approved by the Magadh University, is of little importance in the political history of Mithila, it is otherwise very important. No connected account of the economic history of this ancient kingdom was hitherto available and in that sense the work may be regarded as a pioneering effort to fill the gap and pave the way for further research and investigation. Dr Aquique views his attempt as "probably the first of its kind, to discover the essentials of Mithila's economic life from scanty sources and to co-ordinate them into a foundation framework for a systematic economic history of Mithila' (preface, p. vii). It is, however, doubtful if he has been able to do justice to this long span of nearly 1,700 years in this small book.

The question of the ownership of land in ancient India is not only debatable but confusing as well and baffles all attempts at satisfactory solution. G.M. Bongard Levin has discussed this problem afresh in a recent issue of the Soviet journal, Bestinik Drevniya Istorii (no. 2, 1973), and advanced weighty arguments in support of land ownership being plural in character. Although Dr Aquique has dealt at length with all types of ownership in his chapter on land system (pp. 32-91) (the sources equivocate on this point), he displays a definite bias in favour of the existence of private ownership of land in Mithila. The main weakness of his thesis lies in the fact that although he has extensively referred to ancient lawgivers, not a single specific source from Mithila (a number of Nibandhas were written in this region) has been brought to bear on the question. The conclusions with regard to various taxes are not definitive. The author has traced the existence of feudal elements in pre-Kautilyan period and rightly pointed out that the Arthasāstra "aimed at discouraging whatever of this 'feudal' practice that existed in earlier times" (p. 48). The non-mention of the Panchobh copperplate, which throws sufficient light on the gradation of feudatories, is, however, a glaring omission in his discussion of feudal titles.

Dr Aquique does not appear to be bothered about the locale or date of the sources before using them to support his point of view. Thus in his chapter on corporate life

(pp. 108-25) he has tried to draw on south Indian evidence to hold the view that guilds existed in Mithila (pp. 115-7). Again, in his chapter on slavery (pp. 92-107) he has used evidence of the 19th century and yet failed to clearly bring out the nature of slavery in Mithila. In his brief survey of political history (pp. 7-31) the author has failed to take note of D. Devahuti's translation of two important Chinese texts in her book, Harsha: A Political Study (Oxford University Press, 1970), which would have helped him reassess the political condition of the period. His identification of Brahmamitra with Bahasatimitra (p. 16) rests on nothing more than a mere guess. The chapter on trade and industry (pp. 126-89) is well-written and refreshing and may be considered to be the most useful in the book. It brings to light important trade routes connecting Mithila from all sides.

As for the source material, the author's claim to have tackled all the literary sources does not bear scrutiny. Ganganath Jha's Pūrvamīmāmsā in Its Sources would have helped him in looking into many important problems and D.C. Bhattacharya's History of Navyanyāya would have afforded an insight into the economic condition of the period. The writings of Lakṣmīdhara and Maithil and Buddhist philosophers contain a good deal of information on the economic history of Mithila, but they have not been tapped. Important and useful publications such as Śrīdharadāsa's Saduktikarṇāmṛta, Dāmodara's Uktivyaktiprakaraṇa, D.D. Kosambi's Subhāṣitaratnakośa, H. P. Shastri's Bauddha Gāna O Dohā and Prākṛtapaingalam, N. Ray's, Bāngālīr Itihās, A.K. Chaudhary's Early Medieval Village in North-Eastern India (600-1200), R.C.P. Singh's King and the Ownership of Land, R.S. Sharma's Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, J.P. Sharma's Republics in Ancient India and Grierson's Bihar Peasant Life do not find mention in the bibliography which mentions a Kalpasūtra by Vidyāpati edited by Jacobi (p. 198), though there is no such work. "Monahan" has been printed as "Mohan" (p. 41, fn. 3).

In spite of its apparent shortcomings and contradictions, the work plugs many gaps that exist in the study of the economic history of Mithila and will be found indispensable by researchers in the field. The author's sincerity, diligence and valuable contribution are not in doubt and both he and the publishers deserve our thanks.

BHAGALPUR UNIVERSITY BHAGALPUR

RADHAKRISHNA CHAUDHARY

P. C. JAIN, Labour in Ancient India (from the Vedic Age up to the Gupta Period) (Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1971). Pp. xxvi+276. Rs 40.00.

The present work in six chapters purports to be a comprehensive study of the position of all categories of workers in ancient India. The six broad topics discussed in the book are the social structure and the position of labour, agricultural labour, industrial labour, slave labour, guilds and corporations and the wages of labourers.

Several books on the different aspects of early Indian society and economy cover either wholly or partly the topics included in Dr Jain's work. But with the sole exception of K.M. Saran's Labour in Ancient India hardly any other monograph before 1971 was

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exclusively devoted to the study of this subject. However, both these works leave much to be desired and neither of the two authors, one a man from commerce and another a scholar of Sanckrit, seems to possess the discipline required for writing historical

works.

Dr Jain claims the merit of the present work to be "not a startling discovery of hitherto unknown sources, but a patient compilation and scientific interpretation of the information contained in known sources" (preface, p. xiii). No doubt he has assiduously collected numerous relevant passages from the Vedic, Sanskrit and Pāli texts and also from the inscriptions of post-Maurya and Gupta times, which profusely appear in Nagari character in the notes given at the end of each chapter. On this score the only weak point of the author is that he does not take into account the publications and reports of the Archaeological Survey of India to corroborate the literary evidence. But although the work contains much useful information culled from original and secondary sources, it is an entirely chaotic assemblage of facts. In every chapter the data collected from various sources have been presented in so defective a chronological framework that they fail to provide an integrated picture. Thus every chapter is dotted with such misleading headings and sub-headings as "The Buddhist Period", "The Sūtra Period", "The Pāninian Period". "The Kautilyan Period", "The Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata Period" and so on. Often the same idea recurs under two consecutive sub-headings. For instance, the disparities in the salaries of different categories of government officials and other employees, as provided in the Arthasastra, have been discussed under the sub-heading "The Disparity" followed by still another bigger sub-heading, "The Disparity between the Wages of High Officials and Low-grade Labourers" (pp. 234-6). The author does not consider it necessary to define the types of skilled and unskilled workers before discussing matters like their wages and conditions of service (pp. 236-42).

Quoting a "gifted historian", the author enumerates as many as 102 kinds of guilds of traders, artisans and other classes of workers in the Gupta period and divides them into three peculiar categories of "Musicians" (comprising, among others, actors, singers, acrobats, wrestlers), "Guildsmen" (under which some craftsmen also figure) and "Artisans and craftsmen" (pp. 211-2). But he does not forward any fresh arguments for this categorization, nor does he explain what these three terms, particularly "guildsmen", actually stand for. It is also not clear whether the author examines the factors that led to the evolution of the guild system or whether he discusses the office of the jetthaka and the rules and conditions of service binding on certain categories of artisans (pp. 186-95). He even does not forget to discuss at some length the question of ownership of mines and metals, metallurgy and mineralogy, art, and crafts in the chapter dealing with guild organization. The author should have realized that even a "patient compilation" needs some order and

harmony to give meaning and purpose to the subject.

Dr Jain is not very particular about the correct spellings of the titles of a number of books and the surnames of their writers, given in the notes and the bibliography. For instance, Encyclopaedia Britannica and Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences appear as Encyclopaediae of Brittanica and Encyclopaediae of Social Science (p. 263). The bibliography contains many inaccuracies. It does not give classified lists of original and secondary sources. All the Vedic, Sanskrit and Pāli texts have been jumbled together without complete information in most cases regarding their editors, translators, compilers, dates and places of publication.

Far more unfortunate is the author's English, which is rather shaky. The entire book is full of wrong idioms and common errors. Though it is not possible here to give a detailed list of these errors, some of which illustrate the point are as follows: "Kautilya has furnished a detailed account about..." (p. 104); "...a complete integrated study... in a comprehensive way" (p. xiii); "The ornamental work on robes... was done in ancient India in the same way that the work is done today in Gujarat" (p. 106); "...the finding of terra cotta figurines...shed further light..." (p.118); "...the corporate bodies had various characters..." (p. 185); "In the Rāmāyaṇa, talented and skilled workers were called Sūtrakarmaviśāradāḥ" (p.110); "During the 6th to 8th centuries" (p. 119); "An ivory seal...dated as 4th or 5th century A.D." (p.120) and so on.

Besides, there are numerous examples of faulty punctuation marks, excessive use of commas and inappropriate words and inaccurate use of definite and indefinite articles from beginning to end, which often make it difficult to comprehend the author's meaning readily and precisely.

On the whole despite its informative value the work cannot be regarded as a scholarly effort, for it neither deals with any new matter nor does it provide a scientific approach to the study of the early Indian working class. The author has failed to organize even all the known facts at his disposal into a coherent pattern.

PATNA UNIVERSITY PATNA

RAJESHWAR PRASAD SINGH

## S. K. MAITY, Early Indian Coins and Currency System (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1970). Pp. xii + 136. Rs 20.00.

Dr S.K. Maity originally approached numismatics as an economic historian. In his Economic Life of Northern India in the Gupta Period he studied coins of the period as a medium of exchange, analysed their gold content and deduced significant results. Since then he has been making similar laboratory studies of other coin series. Some of his papers, published in the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, find a place in the present publication. A perusal of the contents will show that Dr Maity is interested mostly in those problems of numismatics which attract the attention of a student of economic history.

In predicting a great future for numismatic studies in India in the first chapter the author shows how coins are useful in understanding the early history of the country. By mentioning stray but convincing examples he demonstrates the importance of coins for political, administrative, religious, economic, art and cultural history and historical geography. He does not attempt a detailed analysis. The chapter can well serve the purpose of introducing the subject to a student beginning his study of ancient Indian numismatics.

The next chapter deals with currency and exchange in ancient India. The narrative is divided into several periods, Indus Valley, Vedic and post-Vedic, pre-Maurya to post-

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Maurya, pre-Gupta to Gupta, post-Gupta and early medieval. The author takes into account all sorts of evidence, literary, epigraphic and numismatic, to describe the actual practice. Considering the problems and controversies involved and the detailed treatment in works dealing with specific periods, the author has successfully accomplished his aim of presenting a survey of the currency and system of exchange throughout the ancient period.

The next two chapters contain the result of the researches which Dr Maity has carried out with the help of mathematical studies. Though not a pioneer, he has certainly made large-scale and systematic use of this method in the field of early Indian numismatics. He has analysed the gold content and metrology of coins. On the basis of Gresham's Law and the principle that with the decline of the political fortunes of a dynasty the gold content of its coinage declined he has thrown important light on the history of the Kuṣānas and the Guptas. He says, for example, that the Kaniska group of kings succeeded the Kadphises group; there were two Huviskas, two Vāsudevas and two Kaniskas; the Candragupta-Kumāradevī coins were issued by Candragupta I; the Kāca coins were not issued by Samudragupta, but by a usurper; there were two Kumāraguptas after the death of Skandagupta; the Gupta empire had to face a difficult politico-economic situation after the later part of the reign of Skandagupta; and the Gupta genealogy is to be arranged as Candragupta I, Samudragupta, Kācagupta (? Rāmagupta), Candragupta, Pūrugupta, Narasimhagupta, Kumāragupta II, Kumāragupta (? III). Visnugupta Vainyagupta.

The author has also analysed the gold content of the coins of Śaśānka, the Tomaras, Gāhaḍavālas, Kalacuris and Candellas. There are several problems in the numismatic history of these dynasties where this method can throw welcome light. We wish Dr Maity had taken cognizance of these problems and analysed the gold coins with a view to finding their answers.

The book has an appendix, the first part of which has no connection with numismatic history. It brings out the salient features of the culture of the Guptas and shows that the age may be called the Golden Age, being a time of great material and cultural prosperity like the Elizabethan and Victorian ages, but depending like them on the efforts of the toiling masses for this prosperity. The second part of the appendix analyses, within the limitations of the evidence, the cultural significance of the coins of the Guptas. It, however, fails to take note of the fact that Vidya Prakash has also analysed in JNSI, xxiii, 267-96, some aspects of the material life of this period on the basis of Gupta coins.

Dr Maity's book is a welcome addition to the meagre literature on ancient Indian numismatics and will be profitably consulted by students and researchers as well as numismatists and economic historians. At the time of the second edition Dr Maity would do well to take due note of recent studies by other researchers, avoid repetitions like those which have crept in on pages 50-2 and 92-3 and remove printing errors.

Banaras Hindu University Varanasi LALLANJI GOPAL

The Indian Historical Review

ATREYI BISWAS, The Political History of the Hūṇas in India (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. xvi+243. Rs 38.00.

The present work substantially represents the doctoral thesis of Dr Atreyi Biswas, prepared under the supervision of Professor A.L. Basham and approved by the University of London in 1965. The chief object of this study is "to write a history of the Hūṇas, from their earliest invasion to (sic) India until they were assimilated into Hindu society" (preface, p.xvi). In the words of the learned supervisor this is "one of the finest historical studies to have been produced in India in recent years" (foreword, p.xiv). This claim is, however, totally unwarranted and has no justification whatsoever.

The 25-page introduction is devoted to the history of the Hūṇas before their invasion of India and briefly summarizes their exploits in China, Europe and Persia. In discussing the origin of the Ephthalites or the white Hūṇas the author takes into account the testimony of the Chinese chronicles and important secondary sources bearing on the problem and concludes that "until further evidence for their origin is discovered, it is impossible to accept any theory as beyond criticism" (p. 19). In other words, she has not been able to throw any new light on the problem of the origin and ethnology of the Hūṇas in India (ch. I, pp. 26-44) beyond what is already known to us through the works of the earlier writers on the subject.

In chapter II which deals with the early Hūṇas in India Dr Biswas claims to have presented a chronological list of the predecessors of Toramāṇa. On the authority of the Chinese text, Wei-shu, and other secondary sources she maintains:

...the Kidarites were Huns and came to Gandhāra sometime around A.D. 388 under the leadership of their king Ki-to-lo and occupied the provinces from the Kuṣāṇas, and hence their king took the title of Kuṣāṇas Sah (p. 47).

But the author does not seem to be sure of this identification and contradicts her statement in the very next paragraph by declaring:

The Hūnas, who invaded India were Ephthalites or white Huns and not Kidarites, though Kidarites themselves were a branch of the great Hunnish tribe (p. 48).

Such statements do not carry us far. The fact is that the origin of the early Hūṇas is so mixed up with that of the Hunnish tribe in general that it is impossible to separate them from their original stock and hazard any conjecture in the present state of our knowledge. The identification of Thujina (Tuñjina) or Tigin with the father of Toramāṇa is equally hypothetical and the evidence of the Rājatarangiṇā (at many places denounced by the author as unreliable for historical data) and that of the so-called Tuñjina coin, on the analogy of the style of the coins issued by previous Ephthalite leaders about whose exploits we have absolutely no knowledge, cannot be taken to be reliable in the least.

In chapter III the author has dwelt at length on the foreign origin of Toramāṇa about which some of the earlier writers were doubtful. Though she has taken great pains to refute the views of K.B. Pathak and others on this point, we feel that the problem does not merit further discussion in view of the discovery of two important seals in the Kauśāmbī excavations bearing the legends, Toramāṇa and Hūṇarāja, which Dr Biswas has not been able to

consult (G.R. Sharma, *The Kausāmbī Excavations*, pp. 15-6). Thus there is no doubt that Toramāṇa of the inscriptions as well as of the coins was a Hūṇa and the father of *Mihirakula* (for details see the reviewer's book, *The Hūṇas in India*, chapter V).

As regards the battle of Eran, Dr Biswas claims:

...it is nearly settled that when Bhānugupta and Goparāja came to Erān, Toramāṇa was still ruling there. The erection of the pillar by Bhānugupta in Erān confirms that Toramāṇa suffered defeat and the province was re-occupied by the Guptas (p. 65).

We wonder how she has arrived at this conclusion when the inscription itself is silent on the point. The Eran inscription of Bhanugupta states that he fought against the enemy (evidently the Hūṇas) after a decade of Budhagupta's reign (i.e., A.D. 510) and Goparāja. his brave general, fell in the battle. The inscription is quite vague as it refers to his fight with the enemy but mysteriously keeps silent over the ultimate results. It does not even mention the enemy by name. It is presumed, and rightly so, that the enemy would have been the Hunas under Toramana who had by then established himself as the master of those regions. In fact Bhanugupta does not seem to have advanced to check the sweeping thrust of the enemy; on the other hand he made a desperate but bold attempt to rout the enemies from those lost territories where they were now deeply entrenched, but failed in his mission. Had it not been so, the epigraph would have recorded his victory in no uncertain terms, as is usual with such prasastis. But the lack of positive expression in the record makes one suspect that the disintegration of the empire had gone too far to be checked and the goddess of fortune had deserted the Guptas for ever. That Toramana's death in the battle is not mentioned in the inscriptions (p.65) is quite natural, for we know on the authority of the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa that he died at Kaśī in A.D. 515 after his victorious march to Gauda and Magadha. Moreover, Dr Biswas has not fully dealt with the wars and conquests of Toramana in northern India which one would naturally expect in a work like this.

Similarly the knotty question as to who defeated Mihirakula first—Narasimhagupta Bālāditya or Yaśodharman—has not been answered satisfactorily, and Dr Biswas, following Smith, Pathak and others, seeks to reconcile the two conflicting theories by assuming that "Bālāditya and Yaśodharman defeated the Hūṇa chief in confederation" (p. 92). But a close study of the Gwalior stone inscription of Mihirakula, the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana and the account of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang as well as other relevant sources clearly indicate that Mihirakula was defeated in two different battles, at two different places and on two different dates. Similarly her reconstruction of the chronology of the later Gupta, though irrelevant in this context, does not improve upon Professor B.P. Sinha's masterly work, Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, and the latest monograph on the subject by Dr S.R. Goyal.

Dr Biswas, however, deserves our praise for throwing some fresh light on the later Hūṇas and the Hūṇa coins (chapter VI and Appendix I), though even here she is not on firm ground and, in the absence of definitive historical data, there is scope for difference of opinion. The work is on the whole up-to-date and scholarly. The reproduction of art-plates and maps has been neatly done and the book is well-printed and got-up. However, a number of notable recent research tracts on the subject do not find place in the biblio-

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graphy and the index leaves much to be desired. The lack of uniformity in diacritical marks and several printing errors should have been avoided.

Magadh University Bodh-Gaya UPENDRA THAKUR

P. BANERJEE, Early Indian Religions (Vikas Publishing House, 1973). Pp. xiv+241; 23 photographs. Rs 30.00.

The aim of the book, as stated by the author in the preface, is to trace the religious history of India in the post-Maurya and pre-Gupta period, that is, from c. 185 B.C. to A.D. 300. In the introductory chapter Dr Banerjee seeks to discuss the origin and nature of neobrāhmanism and its relation to Vedic religion. In his view neo-brāhmanism, by which term he means brāhmanism of the epic-Purāna complex, was the outcome of a "reconciliation between old-Brāhmanic or hieratic" and popular beliefs. The idea of a personal god along with Vedic ritualism and polytheism may be traced to the earliest Samhitā literature: and Dr Banerjee regards the concepts of polytheism, henotheism, pantheism, ritualism, philosophical theism and devotion to a personal god as not necessarily appearing in a chronological sequence and probably being current at the same time in different social circles and regions of India (p. 8). When Vedic religion became excessively formal and ridden with rituals it could no longer satisfy the religious cravings of the people and dissatisfaction was openly expressed by "those who were outside the orthodox pale". The Āranyakas made attempts at compromise (p. 5) but early Upanişads were as indifferent to Vedic gods as to popular religion (p. 9). They provided "philosophical rationalisation" of Vedic sacrifices and "emotional sublimation" of popular worship. Out of Upanișadic speculations arose the philosophical systems of the Jains, the Buddhists and the Sāmkhyas. The former two repudiated the authority of the Vedas and the caste privileges of the brāhmaṇas, and as these developed into mass movements brāhmaṇism remodelled itself by assimilating popular cults.

This typically idealistic understanding of India's religious history neatly avoids all questions of historical significance reducing itself to a mere chronicle of fortuitous happenings. However, unless one believes in the divine intervention being the prime mover of history, an attempt has to be made to study religious traditions in their social context in order to understand and account for their existence, persistence or decadence. But Dr Banerjee does not find it necessary to explain why in view of his assumption that popular worship of personal gods existed side by side with the Vedic cult of sacrifices it was only at a given point of time that the priestly class realized the necessity of coming to terms with the popular forms of worship, or what were the factors which led to the excessive ritualism of the brāhmaṇas and why the intellectual revolt against Vedic sacrifices and formalism gained so much momentum in the sixth century B.C. that it generated powerful sccts against orthodoxy. Strictly speaking, much of this would be outside the professed scope of Dr Banerjee's work, but a proper understanding of the historical background is absolutely

essential for a meaningful study of later developments, and Dr Banerjee is so obsessed with the problems of beginnings and antiquity that apart from the introductory chapter he has devoted almost one third of the space in several chapters (e.g., II, IV, VII) to tracing the

earlier history of the religion in question.

Of the remaining six chapters five deal with the history of Saivism, Bhagavatism, Naga-worship, Jainism and Buddhism. It is curious that although all these cults and sects with the exception of Jainism, in which case the areas are specified, are said to have enjoyed "wide popularity" through the length and breadth of India during the period under review, hardly any attempt has been made to trace their interaction with the result that each chapter reads like an independent monograph having no link with the next one. This is not very surprising, for the bond connecting various contemporaneous beliefs and practices is embedded in the social conditions which give them birth and an author who fails to view a phenomenon in its social setting is not likely to discover what lies beneath the seemingly unrelated parallel developments. Arbitrary attempt at explanation without a critical examination of the material foundation is fraught with grave risks, and the author's remark that the "secret of the strength of the dissenting faiths, specially Buddhism, lies in the personal devotion shown to the founder" and that the deification of the Buddha exercised a profound influence on "impersonal" brāhmanism transforming it into a theistic movement (p. 12) can at best be regarded as an example of superficial analysis. Much more than the personal charisma of the founder, the popularity of Buddhism depended upon its practical aspects, emphasis on non-violence, disregard of caste restriction and favourable attitude towards the merchant class and its interests. And if theistic development in brahmanism is to be traced to an outside influence, why should the credit not be given directly to the cults of the Nagas, Siva and Vasudeva, especially as according to Dr Banerjee Vāsudeva Krsna was a teacher-reformer of Vaisnavism flourishing and apotheosized long before the birth of the Buddha?

The conclusion is obvious. No worthwhile generalization is possible unless it is based on a historical perspective which takes note of the total material complex and not just the isolated trappings of a superstructure. A study of the doctrines, rituals and practices of a sect could have acted as a corrective and given the work some depth; for whatever the cult, it is the morality associated with it which is of real significance. But in concentrating on historical details found in epic-Purāṇic traditions or archaeological discoveries Dr Banerjee has missed the main feature of the religious history of this period which was of supreme importance to the composers of the epics and the Purāṇas. As V.S. Sukthankar, R.C. Hazra and some other scholars have shown, the epics and the Purāṇas were remodelled in the early centuries preceding and succeeding the Christian era with a view to preaching brāhmaṇical social ethics through the medium of sectarian worship. The close intertwining of religion and morality in India justifies the comment that "all that appears to be social is in fact religious and all that appears to be religious is in fact social" (Louis Dumont, Religion, Politics and History in India, 1970, p.16).

Dr Banerjee shows too much gullibility and uncritical reliance on tradition in believing that Kṛṣṇa's "religious leadership and his brand of Vaishṇavism came to be accepted in Magadha, Puṇḍra and Pragjyotisha, with his career of political conquests in those regions"

(p. 69), and he has no thought to spare to the likelihood of these and similar legends of farflung victories recorded in the epics long after their supposed occurrence as being later accretions to the popular lore. A sifting of the background reflected in the stories themselves and of the age in which they were written in their present form is essential for examining the historical antecedents of the Kṛṣṇa saga, and the late Professor D.D. Kosambi had drawn attention to the antiquity of Kṛṣṇa's characteristic weapon, the discus or the wheel, as shown by the Mirzapur cave paintings of c. 800 B.C. The primitive equipment of Kṛṣṇa and his tribal-pastoral background ill fits the grandiose stories of conquests narrated in the epics. But Dr Banerjee is so convinced of the accuracy of the epic and Purāṇic legends that he is not content to agree with Raychaudhuri that the Sāttvata or Bhāgavata Dharma "originated with the Sāttvata prince Vāsudeva" and asserts:

...the Sāttvatas from Satvant onward (who was a younger contemporary of Rāma Dāśarathi), the predecessors of Krishņa were all Vaishņavites, believing in Vishņu worship characterized by love, devotion and service to a monotheistic divinity and that Krishņa Vāsudeva developed this theism into a special cult later on known as Vāsudeva or Bhāgavata or Pañcharātha (sic) (p. 82)...

He adds further that "while Krishna reformed Vishnu worship, Balarāma reformed Rudra-worship" and this was at first "a source of the conflict between the two 'Dharma-pravartaka' brothers, and their adherents" (pp. 92-3). It does not strike him as strange that all available evidence shows the popularity of Baladeva-worship not among the Saivas whose reformer-preacher he is supposed to be but among the devotees of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu and that Baladeva's identification with Siva finds mention only in later Pāñcarātra works and Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas.

Dr Banerjee raises the interesting problem of the continuity of Vedic observances in the chapter entitled "Survival of Vedic Elements in Neo-Brahmanism" (ch. V). He asserts that orthodox brāhmaņism of the Vedic variety had a continuous existence down to the Gupta-Vākātaka times and it is wrong to hold that Pusyamitra's horse-sacrifice marked the revival of brāhmaņism. Neo-brāhmaņism was à synthesis of Vedic and non-Vedic, hieratic and popular, elements and although pure Vedic religion did not have an independent existence, orthodox Vedic practices continued to enjoy wide popularity (p. 138). He refers to the performance of Vedic sacrifices by the Śungas, Kānvas, Sātavāhanas, Bhārasivas, Ikṣvākus, Vākāṭakas, Pallavas and Kadambas and the patronage of the brāhmaņas by the Śaka satraps. In the opinion of the reviewer the peformance of Vedic sacrifices during this period was more a symbol of status than the fulfilment of a religious need. Dr Banerjee does not tackle the question of Vedic elements in popular sectarian worship, but a deeper probe into the religious history of the period would indicate that with the absorption of popular cults the content of brāhmanism was radically changed and Vedic elements, such as the use of Vedic hymns in sectarian worship, were superimposed to give these cults the stamp of orthodoxy. This chapter would have benefited a great deal if the remarks of L. C. . L. dian if the remarks of J. Gonda in the introduction to his book Change and Continuity in Indian Religion (The Hague, 1965) were taken into consideration, but the "Select Bibliography",

which mentions such text books as Majumdar, Raychaudhuri and Datta, An Advanced History of India, takes no note of the writings of J. Gonda, Sudhakar Chattopadhyay and D.D. Kosambi.

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SUVIRA JAISWAL

L. P. PANDEY, Sun-Worship in Ancient India (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1971).

Pp. xxxii+368; 31 plates. Rs 50.00.

The sun is too obvious a luminary to escape notice. Its daily appearance on the horizon made its presence felt continuously and the enormous volume of light and heat generated by it and their beneficial effects evoked spontaneous awe and reverence in the minds of people who apotheosized it early. It is no wonder then that the sun-god was worshipped under various names and in different forms in almost all the ancient civilizations. In India too sun-worship has been prevalent from very early times.

The present monograph, the author's Ph.D. thesis approved by the University of Delhi in 1967, purports to study the history of solar worship in India from the earliest times to the 13th century. The preliminary pages include, among other things, an interesting foreword by Professor G.C. Pande, a recommendatory certificate by Professor A.L. Basham and a few paragraphs which, by way of introducing the subject, seek to give an idea of the popularity of sun-worship in the various civilizations of the ancient world (pp. xxix-xxxi). Next follows the treatment of the subject in two parts, part I dealing with the progress of the sun cult and part II focusing attention on some important centres of sun-worship.

The inaugural chapter (pp. 1-9) attempts to show the prevalence of solar worship in prehistoric and protohistoric India. The treatment is based on the occurrence of certain devices such as a semicircle with radiating rays, six-rayed star, svastika and spoked wheel, which are believed to have solar association, in some rock-paintings and Neolithic graffiti and on Harappan seals and pottery. The second chapter (pp. 10-42) treats of the evidence of the Vedic Samhitas and Brahmanas which show that in addition to the sun which, in the form of its visible orb, was the object of fervent prayers by the Vedic seers, a number of solar divinities received spontaneous veneration from the people. It is observed that contemplation of the various forms of the sun-god contributed to the rise of monotheism. The sun is identified with the Supreme Spirit and invoked as Supreme God at many places in the Rgveda, a trend noticeable in other Samhitas also. A connection between solar worship and sacrificial ritual is also suggested. In the concluding paragraph attention is invited to a few solar devices found on later Chalcolithic pottery, evidently because the author regards the Chalcolithic period as coinciding with the Vedic period. ChapterIII (pp. 43-63) makes use of the evidence of Yāska's Nirukta, Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, early Buddhist literature, classical writings, the epics and punch-marked coins to pinpoint the growing Popularity of solar worship from circa eighth century B.C. to the close of the Maurya period. During this period some of the deities originally in the solar group lost their solar character and began to be worshipped independently, but sun-worship appears to have greatly appealed to the masses and in addition to the continuation of the age-old adoration of the visible solar orb the sun came to be represented in an anthropomorphic form. In chapter IV (pp. 68-73) are noticed some important sculptural representations of Sūrya carved in the Sunga period and it is concluded that the sun-image originated in India independently, its character being purely indigenous. Some solar symbols seen on tribal coins are also noticed. Chapter V gives an account of the numismatic and sculptural depiction of the sun-god during the rule of the Indo-Greeks, Sakas and Kuṣānas. It is pointed out that the Kusānas gave a new orientation to the general representation and iconography of Sūrya images. Thus were introduced long boots, heavy drapery on his body, sword and lotuses in his hands and a nimbus behind his head. But the iconography was still in a state of flux and received finality only in the Gupta period (pp. 74-8). Chapter VI, the largest in the book covering 98 pages (pp. 79-176), provides a survey of the epigraphic, sculptural and literary evidence showing the continued popularity and wide diffusion of sun-worship all over India from the beginning of the third to the 13th century, the widest span of time covered in any single chapter. The concluding chapter of part I discusses, in profile, the question of foreign elements in solar worship and denies altogether the possibility of foreign impact (pp. 177-86). The chapter ends with a résumé of the foregoing chapters (pp. 187-90).

The five chapters which comprise part II invite attention to centres of solar worship in northern, central, eastern, western and southern India on the basis of the extant literary and archaeological evidence (pp. 193-267). These are followed by four appendices giving selected extracts from literary works bearing on the iconography of Sūrya and his associates (pp. 268-88), inscriptional extracts related to solar worship (pp. 289-97) and lists of solar fasts described in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (pp. 298-300) and some ancient Indian solar temples (pp. 301-6), a bibliography, an index and plates.

The work is undoubtedly the first to attempt a study of the subject in all its dimensions and will, it is hoped, give a fillip to similar studies in future. Its merit lies mainly in its furnishing a good deal of valuable material in a handy volume. The get-up and plates are commendable.

Unfortunately, however, perusal of the work is seriously hampered by technical defects, factual errors and defective arrangement to which we now refer. The captions of some of the chapters are wrongly worded. On page 10 the chapter heading is given as "Sun-Worship in the Early Vedic Age", while in the table of contents it is correctly specified as "Sun-Worship in the Vedic Age", for the chapter deals with both the early and later Vedic periods. In the caption of chapter V, "Sun-Worship under the Age of the Indo-Greeks, Sakas and the Kuṣāṇas", under should have been replaced by in. The system of transliteration adopted by the author is unscientific. The cerebral sibilant ( $\mathfrak{q}$ ) is transliterated by  $\mathfrak{x}$ , but the same letter preceded by k is transcribed as ksh;  $k\mathfrak{x}$ . would have been in keeping with the remainder of the system. Moreover, the method of transliteration given on page xxvi is not adhered to scrupulously. Thus we come across Viṣḥṇu (p. 16),  $Ri\mathfrak{x}^{i}$  (p. 55),  $Prithiv\bar{\imath}$  (p. 57), Chandradeva (p. 201), Govinda Chandra (Ibid), etc. At many places wrong diacritical marks have been used, for example,  $Ansumadbhed\bar{\imath}gama$  (pp. 125-7) places wrong diacritical marks have been used, for example,  $Ansumadbhed\bar{\imath}gama$  (pp. 125-7)

and Ansumadbhedāgama (p. 183) for Amsumadbhedāgama, kumkuma (pp. 129,141) for kunkuma, Sanjīā (p. 162) for Samjīā. Numerous are the instances of unnecessary use of diacritical marks, for example, Triviṣṭapa (for Triviṣṭapa, p. 58), Tamoṇuda (p. 58), Trinetra (p. 133) and Trideva (p. 136). Some Sanskrit words are spelt wrongly and b is often substituted for v, and vice versa, for example, Bibhāvasu (p. 58), naibedya (p. 141) and Vrhaspati (p. 57). No system is followed as regards spelling ancient Indian personal names. Thus on pages 81-2 we come across both Viśvarūpasena and Viśvarūpa Sena, Lakshmaṇasena and Lakshmaṇa Sena. We also have Vināyaka Pāla, Mahendra Pāla and Rāma Bhadra (p. 81), as if Pāla and Bhadra were surnames.

Likewise no system is discernible as regards the method of abbreviating titles of books and journals. There are instances of abbreviations not included in the list on page xxi. As examples may be cited H.I.I.A (for Coomaraswamy's History of Indian and Indonesian Art) on page 35 fn. and NJRI on page 224 fn. Again, in the list of abbreviations Ancient India is abbreviated as AI, whereas on page 4 fn. we find it shortened as Ancient Ind. The Journal of the UP Historical Society is abbreviated in the list of abbreviations as well as at many other places in the book as JUPHS, but at one place (p. 181 fn.) we come across UPHS7. There is also no uniformity in the citation of the periodicals and sometimes the same journal is cited in two different ways. Thus at some places the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society is cited as JRAS, but at other places as JRAS (Great Britain) (p. 64 fn). We also find at one place "JUPHS, vol. 4 by Rai Sahib Babu Prayag Dayal" (p. 193 fn.). References to articles in periodicals are not properly cited. The author of the article is mentioned first, followed by the relevant issue of the journal and the title of the article. It would have been more convenient and in keeping with the commonly adopted method had the author first mentioned the writer of the article and then the title of the paper followed by other details. At places the names of authors are not spelt correctly and sometimes the same name has been spelt in different ways. Among examples are Megasthenese (pp. 53 fn., 54), McCrindle (pp. 53 fn., 54 fn.), Gardener for Gardner (p. 74 fn.), J. N. Bannerjea (pp. 65 fn., 73 fn., 114), R.D. Bannerjea (p. 87 fn.) or R.D. Bannerji (p. 111 fn.) and All Idrisi (p. 107). Instances of wrongly mentioned titles are also not wanting. To cite only two of them, we find Comprehensive History of the Mauryas and the Satavahanas (p. 186 fn.) and Early Chauhan Dynasty (p. 232 fn.). The bibliography runs into 38 pages (pp. 307-44), but a large number of titles included in it are not mentioned even once in the body of the book, usual bibliographical details are often ignored and instances of incorrectly mentioned titles and names of authors or editors are too numerous to be specified. Misprints and mistakes of language and spellings are quite numerous and the corrigenda on page 368 containing just nine entries is grossly inadequate.

There are clear cases of wrong interpretation. Thus on page 164 Sāmba Purāṇa, xxxi.6, and Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, cxxxii. 6, are taken to mean that three-fifths should be the size of the piṇḍika (pedestal) and two-fifths should be the size of the image, whereas the correct interpretation is that in an image one-third portion is allotted to the pedestal and two-thirds to the image proper (this is mentioned by the author as a possibility, p. 164 fn). Actually it corresponds to Bṛhatsaṃhitā, lvii. 3 (see my India as Seen in the Bṛhatsaṃhitā of Varāhamihira, pp. 413-4). Likewise Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, cxliv. 25, is reported to aver that "the Bhojakas

meditate on the five Makāras who are Sun-god Himself. Therefore, they are called Magas" (p. 168). The verse quoted in the footnote, however, clearly states that the sun-god is called Makāra and as Bhojakas meditate upon him they are known as Maga. Nobody knows from where the word "five" has been imported which gives an entirely unwarranted twist to the meaning. The derivation of the name Saurashtra from Sairāṣṭra, which is said to have been due to the association of this region with the Śakas, who were also known as Sai (p. 152), is equally fanciful. At one place (p. 133) the word nakṣatra is translated as "planet".

On pages 266 and 306 Tinnevelly is located in Kerala, while it is actually situated in Tamil Nadu and on page 263 Udumbaramati is mentioned as situated in the Chanda district whereas long back it has been shown to have been situated in the Yeotmal district.

As regards the arrangement of the contents, except for the introduction the preliminary pages should not have been included in part I, as has been done in the table of contents. It would have been better had separate chapters been devoted to the discussion of foreign elements in the solar cult and to the conclusion instead of putting them together in the same chapter, for there is no inherent connection between the two. Likewise iconography of Sūrya should have been treated independently in a separate chapter rather than mixing it up with other details scattered in different chapters.

These drawbacks removed, the book will undoubtedly prove to be an excellent work.

Nagpur University Nagpur AJAY MITRA SHASTRI

S. M. BHARDWAJ, Hindu Places of Pilgrimage in India (A Study in Cultural Geography) (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1973). Pp. xvi+258; 47 maps and graphs, 31 tables and 8 plates. Rs 48.00.

A Graduate School Doctoral Fellowship from the University of Minnesota for the year 1966-7 enabled the author to carry on library work in the historical aspects of the subject while a Junior Fellowship for field work in India for the year 1967-8 was offered to him by the American Institute of Indian Studies. Thus the work, which has 13 chapters besides an introduction and an appendix, is the product of the author's library and field work for two years. The data he collected in the course of his investigation at certain holy places have been placed before scholars in the later sections of the work and these appear to be of some use to the student of cultural anthropology. The earlier sections of the work, however, may not be so useful to a student of Indian history, geography and literature.

The author demonstrates the continuity of the institution of pilgrimage with the help of the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas and later works and concludes that it was established some centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. This dating is based on the fact that he assigns the Mahābhārata (or probably the Tīrtha-yātrā section of the Vana-parvan) at various places to 300 B.C., a date which seems to be much too early. He further speaks of two corridors of contact between north and south India as being related to the south-

ward expansion of plough agriculture, the Hindu holy places being situated in the areas suited for the said mode of cultivation and none of them being found in the areas dominated by the forest-dwelling tribes that practise hunting and gathering and slash-and-burn agriculture. At the same time he says that "pre-Aryan" deities (and not the "purely Aryan" deities) are predominant in the Hindu holy places whose association with flowing water is related to the proto-Dravidian concept of ritual bathing.

Such views are, however, the result of an inadequate study of the original and secondary literature on the subject and indeed it is not possible to study the subject satisfactorily in the short period devoted by the author to it. The truth is that the institution of pilgrimage to holy places is a pre-Aryan institution which the Aryan nomads gradually adopted from the non-Aryans after their advent and settlement in India. While the river Sarasvatī is called "the best among the goddesses" even in the Rgveda, (II. 41.16), Kurukshetra or the Sarasvatī-Dṛṣadvatī valley is regarded as the holiest place in later Vedic literature. There is a Puranic saying which suggests that at one time the Aryan travellers were exempted from the performance of punah-samskāra for visiting the Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Saurashtra and Magadha countries only if it was done for the purpose of pilgrimage. The same idea can be traced in the Baudhayana Dharmasatra (I.2. 14-6) which mentions the lands of a large number of semi-Aryanized (sankirna-yoni) and non-Aryan peoples, some of which contain our important tirthas, e.g., Ujjayini, Prabhasa, Sindhusāgara, Kurukshetra, Gangasagara and Virajī in the lands respectively of the Avantis, Surāstras, Sindhus, Ārattas, Vangas and Kalingas (who originally lived as far as the Vaitarani valley). Some of the principal Indian tirthas are situated in regions far away from the area under plough cultivation, for example, Badarikāśrama, Kailāsa and Manasa-sarovara in the Himalayas, inhabited more or less by Mongoloid people. Likewise many of our most important deities were originally tribal gods and goddesses who were gradually adopted by the upper caste Hindus. It is not necessary to deal here with the non-Aryan origin of Siva and Uma. We have to mention, however, that the god Purusottama-Jagannātha of Puri, which is now one of the holiest tīrthas of the country, was originally worshipped by the aboriginal Śavaras and later came to be identified with the great god Visnu. In the same class we may count such other deities as Vindhyavāsinī near Mirzapur in UP, Kāmākhyā near Gauhati in Assam, Bālājī Venkateśvara at Tirupati in the Chittur district of Andhra Pradesh, Minākṣī at Madurai in Tamil Nadu and many others of lesser fame.

A kind of evidence to which the author's attention may be drawn is inscriptions. In the third century B.C. Aśoka is said to have visited on pilgrimage the Buddhist holy places like Sambodhi (Mahābodhi or Bodhgaya) and Lumbinīgrāma. In the second century A.D. the Hinduized Saka chief Rsabhadatta of the Nasik-Poona region visited the Bārnāśā river, Prabhāsa, Bhrgukaccha, Daśapura, Govardhana, Śūrpāraka, Ujjayinī, Pushkara and many other holy places of western India. In the sixth century A.D. a king of eastern Malwa is known to have committed religious suicide at Prayaga.

For the points raised above the author may kindly consult our Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature, pp. 18-9, 22; Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, 2nd edn, pp. 219, 238-9, 283, 287; Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval

India, pp. 69, 212; and Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization, 2nd edn, pp. 167 ff. (also Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, iii, 203, 206; and Lüders' List of Inscriptions, no. 1135).

There are also other kinds of errors. Just as the *Mahābhārata* is assigned to 300 B.C., the Purāṇas are ascribed approximately to the period from the fourth to the 11th century A.D. (p. 16), though many of the Purāṇas in their present form are certainly of considerably later date. Al-Bīrūnī's celebrated work in Arabic is mentioned as a Persian source (p. 19).

The author's belief that the name  $p\bar{\imath}tha$  is usually applied to the sacred place of a female deity (p. 63, note 26) is not correct. Again, he points out that the selected list of 16 tirthas in chapter 66 of the Garuda  $Pur\bar{a}na$  does not include Badrinath, Kedarnath and Hardwar, "which may not have attained celebrity until later times" (p. 65). Unfortunately the present text of the Garuda  $Pur\bar{a}na$  is a medieval work, while the  $t\bar{\imath}rthas$  in question are mentioned in earlier literary and epigraphic records. Thus, for example, Badarikāśrama is mentioned in the  $K\bar{a}dambar\bar{\imath}$  (seventh century) and Kedāra in the early Pāla inscriptions (see our Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India, pp. 9, 11).

The author writes navarātrā in all cases and also nadistuti and Manu-Smriti (p. 4), "Grhasthīs (householders)" (p. 18), Māyāpuri (p. 19) and Vaiśṇavite (twice on p. 63). The names of the tīrthas in the lists of the Mahābhārata have been spelt without diacritical marks because they have been taken from P.C. Roy's English translation (p. 45, note 4). Such blemishes could have been avoided without much difficulty.

CALCUTTA D. C. SIRCAR

G. S. P. MISRA, The Age of Vinaya: A Historical and Cultural Study (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. xvi+298. Rs 38.00.

The work under review, which deals with the cultural material contained in the Pāli Vinaya, comprises nine chapters of uneven length depending upon the availability of information on the various topics dealt with by the author and a short appendix followed by bibliography and index. The first chapter (pp. 1-34), which is of an introductory character, is divided into two sections. In section I the author deals with the distinctiveness of the Buddhist Vinaya as compared to the rules followed by the brāhmaṇical and Jain ascetics, its different versions including those preserved in the Chinese and Tibetan translations and fragments found in Chinese Turkestan and Gilgit, its history and nature and the role of the first two councils in the development of the Vinaya rules. He regards these councils as historical and concludes that the non-mention of Aśoka in the Vinaya points to its composition probably a century earlier than its importation to Ceylon in Aśoka's time. He further believes that a schismatic council took place sometime between the Vaisali and Pāṭaliputra councils. This, in his opinion, accounts for the omission of the five doctrinal points in the account of the second council and the various dates attributed to it. In section II it is suggested that the present Vinaya is a mixture of old and late

materials, some of the rules going back to the Buddha himself with others added later. After reviewing the different views on the problem of the earlier and later strata in the *Vinaya* it has been concluded that the account of the first two councils was included shortly after the second council and before the Buddhist community was divided into sects and that the account of the second council indicates the existence of the complete *Vinaya* sometime in the first half of the fourth century B.C., a fact supported by the mention of *Vinayasamukase* in Aśoka's Bairat edict and the non-mention of the third council in the *Vinaya*.

Chapter II (pp. 35-78) discusses the Vinaya material on contemporary religious practices and beliefs, both Buddhist and non-Buddhist. Attention is also paid to contemporary philosophers and philosophical ideas, though they find no mention in the caption of the chapter. It has been pointed out, among other things, that the word titthiya originally denoted religious sects of any denomination and that it was only later that it came to be used in the sense of non-Buddhist sects (pp. 49-50). It is analogous to the word ācariyavāda, the original connotation of which was a Buddhist sect of any denomination but later a non-Theravāda school (see my An Outline of Early Buddhism, Varanasi, 1965, pp. 69-70). Chapter III (pp. 79-104) treats of basic Buddhistic doctrines of karma, non-self (anattā), impermanence, etc., in relation to the formulation of the Buddhist discipline. Chapter IV (pp. 105-36) focuses attention on the growth and development of the Buddhist Order and its various rules and practices which are the principal theme of the Vinaya. The author traces the antiquity of uposatha to the Vedic period and thinks that the recitation of prātimokṣa was a Buddhist development on it (p. 120).

Chapters V (pp. 137-58) and VI (pp. 159-203) contain information regarding education, literature and social life. Literary qualities of the *Vinaya* are briefly dealt with at the end of chapter V (pp. 153-8). Chapter VII (pp. 204-19) takes note of the material on polity and contemporary history, which is quite well-known. Chapter VIII (pp. 220-39) invites attention to rather scanty but interesting material on fine arts and architecture. The information on economic condition including flora and fauna is pieced together in the concluding chapter (pp. 240-75). The appendix (pp. 276-7) makes the point that the Mahāyānists looked for disciplinary rules in their Sūtra works, some of which are preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations.

The present work, which won the author the Ph.D. degree of the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, in 1966 undoubtedly contains much useful material on the life and culture of the Buddha's time presented in a systematic form and is an important addition to the existing literature on the cultural history of ancient India. It would not, however, be amiss to allude to some of the drawbacks, absence of which would have made the book eminently readable and considerably more informative.

The book is replete with printing, spelling and linguistic errors which make its perusal a slow process. Some typical examples are: "any point...come down" (p. 22) "validity to" (p. 23), "the Sarvāstivāda schools owes" (p. 28), "childhood and youth of Buddha was spent" (p. 31), "counncils" (p. 33), "countradicted" (p. 48), "heresay" (p. 57), "pursuading" (p. 60), "Vedas, which... is apaureṣeya" (sic) (p. 83) and "passages does not" (p. 139). It is regrettable that in spite of a large number of errors the author, for reasons best known to him, did not think it desirable to give an errata.

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Cases of wrong interpretation are not lacking. To cite a few examples, on page 243 the word apasakkharā has been taken to mean "with few potsherds", whereas the relevant dictionary meaning of Sanskrit śarkarā (= Pāli sakkarā) is pebble, gravel, small stone. The Pārājika mentions fields where pubbaṇṇa (Skt. pārvāṇṇa) or aparaṇṇa (Skt. aparāṇṇa) is grown. The author takes these two words to refer to grains and pulses respectively (p. 244). We feel, however, that these correspond to the pārvavāpa and paścādvāpa of the Kauṭilīya Artha-śāstra and pūrvasasya and aparasasya mentioned in Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṃhitā and may be equated to modern kharif and rabi respectively (see my India as Seen in the Bṛhatsaṃhitā of Varāhamihira, Delhi, 1970, p. 262). On page 270 kāca and sīsa have been wrongly understood in the sense of crystal and glass respectively, their correct connotations being glass and lead respectively. On page 271 the meaning of velūriya (Skt. vaidūrya) is given as diamond whereas it actually means cat's eye.

We also find some significant omissions which considerably mar the value of the work. In the chapter on social life the account of food and drinks, dress and ornaments, hair-dressing and toilet and conveyance and furniture looks something like a mere catalogue, attempts at identification and supplementing the *Vinaya* information from other sources being rather rare. It would have added to the value of the work had the author tried to illustrate the items of dress, furniture and modes of conveyance mentioned in the *Vinaya* with the help of early Buddhist art. On page 273 it is averred that several types of shoes of various hides are mentioned in the *Mahāvagga* (pp. 204-6), but curiously enough there is no reference to them in the chapter on ocial life. The treatment of the rich coin data contained in the *Vinaya* on pages 266-7 is most perfunctory. But the most significant omission appertains geographical material found in the *Vinaya* which has been ignored altogether.

Lastly, a few words about the formal arrangement of the work. The table of contents gives just chapter headings. Detailed contents giving all sub-headings would have been more helpful. A four-page index (pp. 295-8) for a work covering 277 pages and bristling with technical terms is totally inadequate. The list of journals given in the bibliography is quite unnecessary as select articles have been separately listed earlier.

However, these blemishes, do not seriously detract from the merit of the book which will remain a standard reference work for many years to come.

Nagpur University Nagpur AJAY MITRA SHASTRI

B. S. L. HANUMANTH RAO, Religion in Andhra (Tripurasundari, Guntur, 1973). Pp. xii+346+xvi; 8 plates, 1 map. Rs 25.00.

The book under review is a Ph.D. thesis of the Karnataka University. It claims to give a comprehensive survey of religious developments in Andhra from the earliest times to 1325. Since the book is intended to be a survey, the author may justify his choice of an unwieldy

subject and an arbitrarily long period. But a survey presupposes, more than in-depth microstudies, a preliminary understanding of the process of religious change and the forces underlying it. The present volume, which lacks such perspective, necessarily falls short

of a survey.

The 17 chapters of the book, dealing with early religion, Buddhism, Jainism and brāhmanism, much of which is an unintelligent reproduction of secondary material, give the impression of a disjointed narrative. The author has been unduly obsessed with minor issues and commonplace ideas ignoring broader relevant themes. He seems to fritter away his energy in discussing such obsolete theories as the Buddhist origin of Jainism or in looking for Vedic references to early Jain teachers. The treatment of the subject shows little awareness of such important developments as the growth of temple landlordism in the wake of increasing hereditary endowments from the close of the Gupta period, the growing acceptability of tantric ideas and rituals to all major sects and the rise of monastic communities and bhakti associations. The author would have done well to take note of these developments which characterized the beginning of the medieval phase in the religious history of India.

The chief contribution of the author seems to be his discussion of the early Buddhist schools of Andhra which covers part II of the book. The identity of the Śaila and Caityaka schools is stressed and the origin of the Mahāyāna is traced to the Caityaka-Mahāsāmghika school which dominated the great monastic establishment of Amaravati-Nagarjunakonda. The large-scale construction of votive mounds is attributed to the influence of the Caityaka doctrine. Andhra is stated to be the home of the Vajrayāna and the Vajrayāna a later development of the Mahāyāna. Part III describes the spread of Jainism in Andhra. It is contended that Jainism spread to Andhra from the Orissa side in the second century B.C., in support of which the Guntupalli record of Khāravela is cited. The inscription does not bear out the contention beyond the fact that it was issued by a Jain king of Orissa and was found at Guntupalli in Andhra Pradesh.

Part IV of the book touches upon a kaleidoscopic variety of subjects, but adds precious little to our understanding of them. The reader is told that the Purāṇas are as old as the Sūtras (p. 212) and that "reaction" against Śaṅkara's doctrine of illusion started even before the doctrine was preached (p. 233). The pañcāyatana form of worship is described as the "worship of pañcāyatana" (p. 204), while the Nagarjunakonda valley (?) is used as a synonym of the Krishna valley (pp. 85, 301). Elsewhere the author speaks of the "reconciliation" of the system of bhakti with Sāṃkhya and Yoga in the Cālukya period (p. 233), although the authorities cited in support of this "reconciliation" are much earlier than the earliest Cālukya dynasties of south India. Kumārila is described in the same breath as an anti-Buddhist bigot and as a promoter of harmonious relations between rival sects.

Loose expressions and platitudes seem to be a normal feature of the author's style. Some examples are: "Hinduism is a conglomeration of castes and creeds and sects" (p. 196); "Andhradesa was in contact with the Purāṇic literature from very early times" (p. 215); and "there is a strong tradition that Jainism was developed by a succession of twenty four Tīrthankaras" (p. 139). "Long millenniums" (p. 1) "picturesque religion" (p. 83) "amazingly important" (p. 303), "crescent moon" (p. 284) are some of the examples of the vocabulary used by the author.

Dr Rao's use of sources is uncritical. It is unfortunate that he should have to quote Jacobi to say that Risabha was the first Tirthankara (p. 148). He has been frankly credulous in accepting the opinion of Nannayabhatta that the Mahābhārata is an authority on Hinduism and equally naive in accepting the Siddhāntasikhāmani interpretation of the term Vīraśaivism. According to this interpretation vī of Vīraśaivism stands for vi of vidyā (knowledge) and ra for ramante (one who delights), both meaning one who takes delight in the knowledge of Siva. It is, however, not known how vi of vidyā can extend its vowel to become  $v\bar{v}$  of Vīraśaivism. The author's casual approach to the subject is evident from his fascination for hearsay evidence. To prove that Buddhism spread to Andhra in the time of the Buddha he quotes a tradition recorded by Hiuen Tsang, according to which the Buddha was a contemporary of Aśoka and preached his religion from near Aśokan topes in Andhra. He claims thoroughness with inscriptional sources, although at places his acquaintance with them is peripheral. In referring to the splitting up of the Jain Mula Samgha into the Deva, Nandi, Sena and Simha subdivisions he agrees with "other scholars" (the term "other scholars" really refers to only one author namely V.D. Sangave. who does not find a place in the bibliography of the book) to state that these were mere names and not real monastic groups. The author would have disagreed with "other scholars" if he had gone a little more carefully through the volumes of Epigraphia Carnatica which figure prominently in his footnotes and bibliography. Again, he quotes from a publication of 1941 to say that the Dravida Samgha was founded at Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu about the first century B.C., although the unpublished Jvalini Kalpa and the inscriptions which he has quoted make it clear that the Dravida monastic order had nothing to do with the Jains of Tamil Nadu and that it was founded in the Chamarajanagar taluk of Mysore district about the close of the eighth century.

The documentation of the book is erratic despite Filliozat's commendation on the blurb that "the work is well-documented". Titles have been uniformly cited without any mention of the authors (pp. 134, 160) or the dates and places of publication. Incorrect initials of the author (V.S. Pathak appears as S.V. Pathak throughout the book), bracketed references in the body of the text (pp. 102-3, 220), omission from the bibliography of titles cited in the book (p. 184) besides entries of anonymous texts (p. 207) raise serious doubts about the authenticity of documentation.

The author's knowledge of the English language is unsatisfactory. Serious mistakes in the use of verbs, conjunctions and preposition; and slipshod expressions make the book unreadable for considerable lengths. The book also abounds in spelling mistakes both of English and Sanskrit words, many of which will not pass for misprints. Some of these are Nītisāra for Nītisāra (p. 158), Śaṃgha for Saṃgha (p. 188), mokša for mokṣa (p. 159), yakṣi for yakṣī (p. 159), śaktī for śakti (pp. 282-5). Some wrongly spelt English words are viceroyality for viceroyalty (p. 57), succeeded for succeeded (p. 62) depricated for deprecated (Ibid). The confusion in regard to Sanskrit words is greater in the absence of a transliteration chart, the omission of which in an oriental publication is serious.

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A. K. MAJUMDAR, Caitanya: His Life and Doctrine (A Study in Vaisnavism) (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1969). Pp. xvi+392. Rs 25.00.

The book embodies A. K. Majumdar's painstaking and diligent scholarship, but unfortunately does not succeed in preventing a total loss of interest on the part of a reader. The poverty of his method is one major contributory factor in this regard.

The very range of the sources Dr Majumdar has used suggests the ambitious nature of the project. Starting from the earliest religious texts, he has virtually scanned all the available material in English, Sanskrit and Bengali. The variety of listed articles would in itself be an indispensable guide to any further research. One wishes that the credit which one grants to the bibliography could also be attributed to the actual work.

Dr Majumdar has adopted the traditional evolutionist approach and at most places has nothing to offer by way of new and live ideas. Despite his success in finding traces of Vaiṣṇavism even in its most obscure aspects, his explanation for the growth and decay of various sects is unconvincing, to say the least. The procedure which he has chosen is to trace a particular verse somewhere in a text which possibly illustrates a break in the run of ideas. This point Dr Majumdar proceeds to supplement with other textual references by using the same technique. He displays in the process a complete ignorance of society outside the confines of his sources. The result is a book in which intensive scholarship has nearly smothered the emergence of any constructive theory.

The author's perspective is lop-sided. When one considers the material Dr Majumdar has thought fit to present and the questions he has attempted to answer in the light of what he has blatantly omitted, the point is further elucidated. Mention is made of "the divine light" entering first Jagannātha's heart and then Sacī's 13 months before Nimāi's birth. The 32 physical signs of a great man, the physical beauty of the child, the inward rebelliousness at an early age-in fact the first few chapters of the biographical section largely form irrelevant reading and do not in any way increase our understanding of Vaisnavism as a movement. Some of the later chapters concerning Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, Rāmānanda and Vallabhācārya dwell on interesting points which are, however, weighed down by a paucity of analytical ability. It would be worthwhile here to refer as a contrast to Irfan Habib's paper on "The Historical Background of the Popular Monotheistic Movement of the 15th-17th Centuries" (read at the Seminar on Ideas, Medieval India, at the University of Delhi in November 1965). The questions raised there help to place criticism of Dr Majumdar's book in an appropriate light. To what class did the initiators of Vaisnavism belong, both in early and medieval times? What were the social factors which influenced the growth of such a movement? What was the class content of the followers? Dr Majumdar leaves these questions unanswered. As such he is unable to break any new ground.

To the non-Bengali reader chapter XXV will serve as an introduction to Rūpa Gosvāmin and his rasa theory. The basic ideas of the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu have been discussed in detail, but no analysis is made of the various concepts of bhakti, rasa, rati, dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa. Surprisingly enough Dr Majumdar has not even been able to place

this crucial chapter within the overall scheme of his work.

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The book has another drawback. The style is both confused and dull. At times Dr Majumdar comes through as an experienced story-teller; otherwise he is at the abstruse plane of philosophy and metaphysics. Although useful for its comprehensive bibliography and study of wide-ranging sources, the work fails to advance the reader's knowledge of Vaiṣṇavism as a movement.

University of Delhi Delhi

GITA BANERJI

U. P. SHAH (ed), Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, New Series, Vol. IV: Dr, Vasudev Saran Agrawala Commemoration Volume—Part I (Calcutta, 1971-2). Pp. viii+134; 35 plates. Rs 45.00.

Professor V.S. Agrawala was deeply interested in Sanskrit works, Vedic studies and various aspects of Indian art. His widely read book, *India as Known to Pāṇini* (the outcome of his Ph.D. thesis under R.K. Mookerjee), is in English, but his prolific output in Hindi on the cultural study of *Meghadūta*, *Harṣacarita*, *Kādambarī*, *Gītā Navanīta*, *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, etc., is not less well-known. His place in the historiography of Indian art is second only to Ananda Coomaraswamy, whom he greatly admired. The tradition of art historical study on the basis of Purāṇic and classical Sanskrit literature is unfortunately receiving less attention now, except in the works of scholars like Sivaramamurti and Moti Chandra. The dedication of a volume of this once renowned journal is the most appropriate manner in which the present generation of art historians can pay tribute to the late Professor Agrawala and the editor and the publisher deserve congratulations.

The volume contains 13 articles and nine book-reviews, the majority of which are written by Western scholars of Indian art and an Indian scholar settled in the West. The first three articles reveal the personality and achievements of Professor Agrawala. Moti Chandra's account (pp. 1-11) differs from L.K. Tripathi's brief but factual study (pp. 12-7), for the former's close association with the late scholar has enabled him to present a vivid picture not only of Agrawala "the great scholar", "the veritable soul of inexhaustible energy", but also of Agrawala the "great man".P.K. Agrawala's list of published works of his father (pp. 18-22) is a useful, if not an exhaustive, bibliography of the latter's notable and varied contributions.

The other 10 articles cover a wide range of subjects on Indian art and vary both in quality and size. The symbolism of "Śarīravrkṣa, the Body-Tree" (pp. 23-37) is brilliantly brought forth by Stella Kramrisch and, as elsewhere, her scholarship in Indian philosophy, the Sanskrit language and Indian art motif and symbolism is evident. Unfortunately this is the only article in the volume on symbolism, a subject close to the heart of Professor Agrawala.

Jeannine Auboyer reconsiders the date of the cavern of Lomāś Rṣi at the Barabar hills in Bihar (pp. 38-43); Pratapaditya Pal throws more light on the aiduka structure and offers visual evidence (pp. 49-62); J.C. Harle examines afresh one of the attributes (garland?)

held by Mahiṣāsuramardinī in certain Kuṣāṇa images at Mathura and Gupta sculpture (pp. 44-8); P.H. Pott corrects the earlier identification of a Nepalese wooden sculpture as yamakinkara (assistant of the god of death) and identifies this as Hayagrīva, parivāra-devatā (an attendant deity) of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara (pp. 63-5); and M.K. Dhavalikar re-examines the identification of a painting of cave no.I at Ajanta (pp. 98-104) to show that it portrays the story of king Sarvvamdada preserved by Kṣemendra in Avadāna-kalpalatā.

The various aspects of each of these familiar questions have been discussed by earlier and contemporary scholars elsewhere, but the efforts of none of the contributors to the volume can be regarded as futile. Particularly noteworthy is the attempt of Pal and Dhavalikar. Auboyer may not have settled the question "once and for all", but she has succeeded in drawing attention to conclusions which have been expressed for a long time and are yet being continually ignored. But on the identification by Harle of an attribute held in the two upper hands of Mahiṣāsuramardinī there still hangs some mist. Fir t, it appears to be a peculiar way of folding a garland and of holding it; and, secondly, if it were folded in the way in which the author describes it, tufts of flowers or the ends of the garland must have hung from the devī's hands. Contrary to this, we notice a head-like appearance of an animal species (?) on either side. However, such details cannot be fruitfully discussed from photographs and I hope that Harle's conclusions are based on a thorough examination of these details. Harle also traces the development of the devī's iconography; this and the discussion of O. Viennot in her article "The Mahiṣāsuramardinī from Siddhi-Ki-Gupha at Deogarh" (pp. 66-77) help us widen our knowledge in this field.

A paper that brings to light material that has been hitherto ignored is "Śāntara Sculpture" by M.A. Dhaky (pp. 78-97). Dhaky's study is thorough, painstaking, systematic and elaborate. In this paper he tries to establish a style-sequence of the Śāntara sculpture without making a case for the Śāntara style. According to him the surviving Jain sculpture of Humca in the Shimoga district falls into six distinct phases, roughly ranging from about early ninth century to the middle of the 12th century. I am convinced of the sub-phases, but not of all the six stages enumerated by the author. I feel that his argument would have carried greater weight had he divided Humca sculpture into pre-Western Cālukya, Western Cālukya and Hoysaļa. But if Dhaky's intention is to extricate the "Śāntara art" from the shadow of its masters (and they were many), our suggestion becomes superfluous. However,

whether there is a case for the Santara art is still open to question.

Even if Dhaky's classification is tentatively accepted, his analysis of the style and his method of assembling sculpture into homogeneous groups for the purpose of dating them appear to need further consideration. Some examples from his argument may be mentioned to justify this caution. First, the identification of the nāga ceiling stone as that of Dharanendra (p. 83) and also the date assigned to it appear to beg evidence. Secondly, the stylistic unity between Yakṣī Kuṣmāṇḍinī (pl. XVII, 8) and Yakṣī Ambikā (pl. XVI, 7), which according to him accounts for their resemblance, is not evident to this reviewer. Further, I find nothing common between the caurī-bearers illustrated in plate XV, 4 and 5 and in plate XXI, 17 and 18; hence grouping them together in order to assign them to the same sub-phase of the style appears unsound. A wide gap in the stylistic characteristics of the Yakṣīs—and hence in their date—is apparent from the difference found

in the modelling of their torsos and in the workmanship of lower garments and ornaments. The two cauri-bearers cannot form a pair for the obvious reason that both hold cauris in their left arms, incline in different degrees to their right and carry different attributes in their spare hands. These apart, there is also considerable difference in the workmanship of their torsos, dress, decorations, crowns, etc. Despite these minor flaws, Dhaky's effort is admirable and he deserves to be congratulated on provoking our curiosity in a hitherto ignored area of art history.

In "A 'Cloister-City' Ṭanka" p(pp. 108-20) L.P. Van Der Wee brings to light several tankas from various museums that depict cloister-cities. Obviously a laborious correspondence preceded the preparation of the list, for there is not only an effort made to inform us about the museums in which these paintings are available but also those in which they are not. This is undoubtedly a great help to Tibetan scholars.

The text and illustrations are neatly produced. Excepting a wrong reference in Dhaky's article (pl. XXII, fig. 20 must be pl. XXIV, fig. 24) and the date of Someśvara II on p. 93 (1968 should be read as 1068), we find very little that is amiss. The editorial task has been competently performed by Dr Shah.

Karnatak University Dharwar

S. SETTAR

PRATAPADITYA PAL (ed), Aspects of Indian Art (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1972). Pp. xx+171; 107 plates, 24 figures. Price not stated.

Pratapaditya Pal, who has edited the book under review, is perhaps not as well-known in India as abroad, which is due primarily to the fact that he has settled in the USA and is now in Los Angeles as Curator of Indian and Islamic Art. This commendable volume, which is a collection of papers presented in a symposium, has a twofold intention. Each paper, by representing the specialized interest of the respective scholar, is a pointer to the welcome existence of otherwise unknown "specialists". Secondly, in sheer range, which is based exclusively on the Heeramanick collection, from the Begram ivories to Gandāhra, Western Cālukya and Rajasthan, from a little known Tibetan school to Mughal sashes or patkās, the subject-matter not only covers new ground but also provides interesting lead to interested scholars. The nature of this review excludes all possibility of an in-depth evaluation of each paper, an exercise which would not altogether be futile. Therefore, one can most profitably sum up the book by indicating relevant departures in approach, by highlighting some of the crucial questions posed and by bringing to notice those fields which are till now virtually barren.

In his attempt to unravel the "puzzle" presented by the heterogenous nature of the Begram hoard, J.L. Davidson has undertaken, among other things, a strikingly detailed evaluation of the caitya arch forms. The systematic diagrams, especially of the bent-wood and tie-rod types, contribute to clarity concerning some of the conclusions he has outlined. Scholars could easily take up these for future investigation of the arch going into medieval

times. Anyone, however, looking for a more fascinating field could do well to follow the example of M. Slusser. The title of Slusser's paper, "Nepali Sculptures—New Discoveries", is indeed an exact one. His work is based on really unknown temples some of which are very much in the interior. "The need for a thorough study of them is quite evident" (p. 101). Here a researcher's asset would be an easy access to invaluable first-hand information. V.P. Dwivedi brings into focus the hitherto unknown Kashmir iyories. For him their prime significance lies in the manner in which they illustrate the effect

of political turmoils on art history.

Without undermining their actual results it is imperative that one brings to the forefront the method and approach of M.C. Beach, J.C. Huntington and B.N. Goswamv. The diversified development of the Bundi and Kota schools has often been the cause of much confusion. Beach, with characteristic lucidity, isolates the problem to a definition of the limits and interests of the two styles. His search for precision has led him to an ingenious use of a variety of sources (for example, Tod's The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan. London, 1957). The use of general history in placing events (in art) can, as Beach demonstrates, lead to positive results. In this regard Goswamy has gone even beyond Beach. Through Goswamy one recognizes how the study of patronage and the painters in Pahari painting can be enriched by a study of the land records. Goswamy even makes use of the bahis (registers) of pundits of dharmshalas based in Hardwar and Rishikesh. His lively spirit of enquiry is well-condensed in his concluding line: "There are at least no final ones (answers). Yet". Huntington, while disagreeing with Professor Tucci, proceeds to outline the fundamental characteristics of the Gu-ge style (of the western Tibetan region of te-Gartok bordering Lahaul-Spiti) of Tibetan painted scrolls or tankās. This essay is limited in its sphere because the only available examples of Gu-ge scrolls are to be found in the Heeramanick collection. But Huntington, at the outset, specifies the region and the dates of the scrolls he is examining. Thus from a brief enunciation of the stylistic features he undertakes an examination of his subjects and successfully explains some of the salient hallmarks.

In his search for cultural contacts and exchange between Gandhāra and Mathura J.E. van Lohuizen-De Leeuw scans a wide range of material traces—architecture, sculpture, minor arts and crafts and dress. Probably the exhaustive nature of available sources has prompted him to leave out Buddhist iconography. The depth of his scholarship has even led him to reject common interpretations propounded by J. N. Banerjea and D. D. Kosambi. These allude to the nature of so-called "ring-stones". In Leeuw's opinion the objects in question were never meant to be rings and the notion that they were rings in an unfinished state is rather unfounded.

The only goddess in Buddhist iconography known to the layman is Tārā, in the dark and light manifestations (green and white to the Tibetans). D. C. Bhattacharyya's paper is concerned with the establishment of the pañcarakṣā goddesses, that is, the five protective goddesses. He ably elucidates his standpoint with a detailed account of the interlinked religious and historical implications. M. H. Kahlenberg too traverses a relatively untrodden path. He bases his assumptions on about half a dozen examples of the Mughal patkā (sash). Within this major drawback Kahlenberg's elaboration of style, history and

technique is no doubt praiseworthy. Scholars in India can use his approach and attempt similar works on Mughal ob-jets d'art like sword-hilts, jade, glass and clothing even from the few available materials in museums in India.

R. Skelton's discussion of the evolution of the flowering plant motif is ruefully lacking in maturity. The habit of a number of British scholars to trace everything to European influence, an anachronism in the present day, aids them in reaching far-fetched conclusions. Skelton has placed Pierre Vallet's "Martegon Lily" alongside Mansur's "Red Tulips" in an effort to prove his point. The clear dissimilarity between the two is only too obvious (plate XC). As far as the painting from Lord Clive's album is concerned, it was probably a copy by specific order of a European drawing (plate XCI). The Mughal artists, as is well-known, were adept in the art of copying.

Regarding the plates, the absence of single colour plates, in a book of this nature is inexplicable. In the case of the Tibetan painted scrolls,  $patk\bar{a}s$  and the Mughal miniatures such a lapse is inexcusable. However, in the case of sculpture the plates are adequate. Besides, the plates could well have been juxtaposed (e.g., fig. 22) against the relevant text with only slightly extra planning.

Owing to the specialized nature of the papers, this is no layman's book. However, a book like this, based on a collection, "sells" a museum. Museums in India can only profit by an emulation of this feat.

University of Delhi Delhi

GITA BANERJI

PHILIP RAWSON, The Art of Tantra (Vikas Publishing House, Delhi, 1973). Pp. 216; 176 illustrations, 25 in colour. Rs 75.00.

Tantra or tantrism is a magico-religious system which has been prevalent in India since at least the fifth century A.D. What is called the art of tantra does not actually consist of ob-jets d'art created for the sake of aesthetic appreciation, but refers to ritual objects, images and graphic illustrations created for helping the tantric sādhaka (aspirant) achieve magico-religious siddhis (powers) and attain the spiritual goal of identification with the bisexual divinity. Tantric religion has given full scope through its ritual objects to the expression of colourful patterns and vital forms. These ritual art objects are rich in archetypal symbolism and archaic imagery that can have universal appeal to the modern man.

There have been several works on tantric philosophy, psychosomatic methods, iconography and history of tantric religion, of which those by A. Avalon, Mircea Eliade, G. Tucci, B. Bhattacharyya, S. B. Dasgupta, Agheyananda Bharati, H. V. Guenther, J. N. Banerjea and D. C. Sircar are quite well-known. But there are very few books especially devoted to the art of tantra. After Ajit Mookerjee's finely reproduced books here is another on the subject by Philip Rawson, who is working almost on the same lines as Mookerjee in his approach to tantric art. The approach is not art historical or socio-cultural, but is from the point of view of a believer in tantrism who tries to appreciate the meaning

and symbolism of tantric art and who syncretically reinterprets it for its pragmatic value to the tension-torn Western urban public. Rawson's concern is with tantra as a practical living cult, as a way of living and acting, rather than in terms of analytical thinking of "an academic and verbally oriented élite". He says:

The important thing for us is that the archetypal elements in the cult may in practice bridge the gap enabling us to discover, and perhaps to try to visualize in ourselves, the same kinds of experience, learning to use them for similar ends (p. 16).

With this aim in view Rawson has dealt at length with the tantra philosophy, its metaphysical world-views of the cosmos, of the place of the human body in relation to cosmic consciousness, and the  $s\bar{a}dhan\bar{a}$  (psychosomatic effort) to reach the non-dual bisexual divinity. He looks upon tantra as basically "a cult of ecstasy, focused on a vision of cosmic sexuality. Life styles, ritual, magic, myth, philosophy and a complex of signs and emotive symbols converge upon that vision" (p. 9). As he puts it:

Tantra represents a thoroughgoing practical system for manipulating and focusing human libido, enhancing it, and then withdrawing it completely from the passing and valueless phenomena of the world and directing it instead to a transcendent object—in other words for ecstasy....

Instead of austerity and self-mortification, tantrism believes in channelizing human emotions for higher experience. The urges of the human body are not denied but are focused on the spiritual end. Tantra equates the human body with the cosmos and makes use of psychosomatic methods for knitting together the two, assimilating the cosmic body pattern in the individual's body. The sādhaka aims to become one with the cosmic double-sexed primal divinity in eternal blissful intercourse with itself.

In interpreting tantrism Rawson emphasizes the emotive side rather than the conceptual and gives importance to enjoyment (bhoga) in sexual sādhanā. He says that as Arthur Avalon, who first made tantra available to the Western world, was writing for a puritanical audience, he minimized the enjoyment aspect in tantric sādhanā. But one can point out here that in view of various tantric texts giving importance to the ritual aspects of sex, Rawson's interpretation seems to have been made to suit the 20th century Western audience. He often seems to indulge in vague generalizations, for instance, when he says, "Tantra deals in love, and love needs objects. One cannot love nothing. Love means care: and care carried to the limit is probably the ultimate social virtue" (p. 11).

Rawson has described the pragmatic tantric methods for attaining the blissful goal. He has chapters on the basic ceremonials  $(pnj\bar{a})$  and the images for ceremonials, on mantras and yantras, on cosmograms, on the subtle body and its cakras or what is called kundalini yoga and its equivalents in Buddhism. In his interpretation of yantra he rightly points out that what looks like abstraction in a yantra is "the effect not of its indicating an abstract concept for a mental class-relationship, but of its concentrating concrete formulated energy" (p. 71). Here he distinguishes vapid conceptualism of modern art from tantric art which also uses reductive methods and optical effects but always synthetically to concentrate an emotive and psychic content. He has described a variety of yantras and mandalas giving their mystical significance and the methods to use them. Due distinction is made between

Hindu and Buddhist tantrism regarding their different emphasis on philosophical concepts and methods of sādhanā.

The book is profusely illustrated with many examples of tantric art, mainly of India, and of Tibet and Nepal. There are, however, several themes of generically Indian and not particularly tantric content which have been illustrated, sometimes for the sake of minor references; whereas sometimes irrelevant and non-essential points have been added to the text for including a photograph or two. One such non-tantric theme is couples in Kāmaśāstrīya poses (pls. 17-23, 96) which, without clear captions to indicate their secular nature and particularly when illustrated in a book of tantric art, may cause misunderstanding in the mind of the reader. It is only in some short reference in a text that the secular hedonistic aspect of these couples has been mentioned. The naga-mithunas (pl. 67) and a woman giving birth (pl. 13) are not intrinsically tantric art, though tantrism has adopted fertility rituals in its historical development. So, again, it is difficult to see tantric significance in plate 70 depicting a monkey pestering a girl. Plate 98 having the title Śrī Nāthjī is wrongly interpreted. It is not Śrī Nāthjī but his brother Daojī (Balarāma) who raises his right hand, There is a naga canopy also associating him with Balarama. But apart from the wrong identification, the figure is definitely not tantric. The Vallabhācārī Vaisnavas who worship Śrī Nāthjī and Daojī are not tāntrikas.

Similarly temple erotic figures (pls. 14-6, 72-3) are not within the realm of genuine tantric art. They are not functionally related to tantric sādhanā as are yantras and maṇḍalas. Many erotic sculptures of temples show crude bestiality and orgiastic groups and do not represent the ideal of non-duality. Again, genuine tāntrikas would never have exposed their esoteric practices to the lay public. Erotic temple sculptures are the result of a number of complex factors and their configuration in the medieval socio-cultural set-up. However, Rawson does not particularly refer to their tantric context. He vaguely refers to them in the context of "sexual generosity" in Indian culture which is seen in erotic songs and dancing in temples, religious prostitution and folk ceremonies.

It is not the purpose here to criticize the author for what is not within his terms of reference or his universe of discourse, but it may be mentioned that Rawson's exposition of tantric art is mainly at the historical level. It is true and one may agree with Rawson that there are in tantric art some constant patterns and universal archetypal forms, which he has rightly drawn attention to from time to time, but there are also evolving elements in art and it is possible to trace the development of tantric imagery and art within the changing socio-cultural milieu. Some of the elements of tantrism could be historically traced from tribal and folk culture to the level of court art in the medieval period. Historical aspects of tantric art remain to be investigated.

For future editions one hopes that the author corrects the numerous mistakes in diacritical marks in the work.

University of Bombay Bombay

DEVANGANA DESAI

P. L. GUPTA, Gangetic Valley Terracotta Art (Prithivi Prakashan, Varanasi, 1972). Pp. viii+134; 32 plates, 214 figures. Rs 30.00.

Dr Gupta, an eminent numismatist, wrote the present monograph for his M.A. dissertation in 1950. As stated by the author in the preface (p. vi), since then "vast amount of new material has come to light", but he could not revise the work and, bowing to the wishes of friends, let it "go into print very much in the same way as it was originally produced", with only "minor changes" here and there.

The first chapter discusses the antiquity and distribution of the terracottas, their main centres and lack of sufficient stratigraphic evidence for dating them (hence the resort to typology). In the second chapter the testimony of silpa texts regarding the ingredients and preparation of clay has been cited. The author suggests that the elaborate process was meant only for colossal figures and that cotton was also mixed with clay, as is the practice even now. The modelling and moulding methods of the manufacture have been described and the materials that were used in making the models for the moulds discussed. The author's opinion that the model for the mould of the minutely carved Sakuntalā medallion from Bhita might have been of soap-stone, quite suitable for minute carving, appears as plausible as Marshall's view that it was of ivory. Then follows a discussion of the use of single or double moulds, wash, slip, polychrome decoration and the technique of baking in oxidizing and reducing conditions. The author correctly observes that the colour of the objects depends on the chemical components of clay and the technique of firing.

In the third chapter "archaic" or primitive terracott as from some select sites have been discussed. The primitive figures have been dated between 300 B.C. and A.D. 100 and it has been suggested that they probably continued to be manufactured up to the Gupta period. The reviewer feels that this date-bracket should be wider. Chapter IV deals with modelled figures with moulded faces from Mathura, Buxar, Pāṭaliputra and Bangarh—their regional characteristics, sculptural parallels and dress and ornaments.

Chapter V discusses moulded plaques period-wise under different heads. The famous female figure in Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is described in quotes from Johnston. Its provenance at Tamluk is considered probable, but on the basis of style, following Johnston, it is labelled as a Kauśāmbī product. Interesting examples of "lady and bird motif" are the parrot touching the lips of the lady, mistaking her teeth for pomegranate seeds, the bird pecking at the pearls of the lady's necklace and the crane with bill raised upwards as if gulping down the drops of water dripping from the lady's hair. The author rightly observes that female figures holding lotus should not invariably be identified as Lakṣmī. Woman with mirror or fan, dancing figures, mithuna figures (sometimes in amorous poses), Bacchanalian couples, erotic scenes, "mother and child" motif and the probable depiction of the dramatic flight of Udayana with Vāsavadattā, Dusyanta in chariot being entreated by a hermit not to kill the antelope in the hermitage, Sakuntala with her two friends watering the trees and Ravana's abduction of Sītā are some of the interesting portrayals. Dr Gupta rightly considers the Śakuntalā medallion from the Śunga stratum as antedating the period of Kālidāsa by a few centuries; some scholars, however, take the evidence of this medallion to support the theory that Kālidāsa lived in the Śunga age. The reviewer thinks that the

stag-drawn chariot motif depicts either an imaginary or a ceremonial scene—such chariots of wood are to be seen in modern marriage processions—rather than a normal one, as suggested by the author.

In the sixth chapter we are told that in the case of life-size images different parts of the body were made from different moulds and then luted. The facial features of the figures of the foreigners should have been described in greater detail and their photographs provided. Chapter VII deals with architectural terracotta art or bas reliefs which are either partly moulded and partly modelled or wholly moulded. The author's statement that the architectural terracotta art spread from north-west to east India is well-founded. Since the author is not concerned with terracottas after A.D. 1200 in the present work (p. 72), the listing of sites yielding 15th-19th century terracottas (pp. 71-2) seems unnecessary.

Chapter VIII discusses the religious aspect of the terracottas. Dr Gupta rightly suggests that some of the female figures might represent folk deities, different from Harappan and Vedic traditions. The plausible reading [Va] sudha  $(=dh\bar{a})$   $ra(=r\bar{a})$  on a Boston Museum terracotta lends weight to the identification of some figures as Vasudhārā. Buddha, Bodhisattva, Viṣṇu and his manifestations, Śiva in different forms, Sūrya and several other brāhmanical and Buddhist deities have been represented. The author plausibly suggests that the three-headed goddess, identified as a brāhmanical counterpart of the Buddhist Hārīti by Agrawala, may represent Ṣaṣṭhī (her three heads in the rear are supposed to be hidden by front ones) and that the winged female figure from Basarh, considered by Marshall as indicative of Mesopotamian influence through Persia, may actually represent some celestial figure of the Indian pantheon. It is, however, difficult to agree with the author's statement that the Ardhanārīśvara representations of Śiva show Śiva and Pārvatī in amorous postures.

The appendix alphabetically lists the sites yielding terracottas together with their location and in some cases also their types. This is followed by a select bibliography, abbreviations, plates, list of illustrations, index and corrigenda.

The reviewer shares the author's view that "a book on the subject written afresh would be more useful" (p. vi). As it is, the book incorporates at places information from works published after 1950, the year when it was originally written, while at others completely ignores it. Hence some anomalies and contradictions occur. To wit, the number of Gangetic valley sites yielding terracottas on page 1 is given as 53, but 74 such sites have been listed on pages 99-114; on page 3 we are told that terracottas have not been found in the Painted Grey Ware levels and on page 100 that they have been found in the Harappan and Painted Grey Ware levels at Alamgirpur. Further, in the light of the evidence from Alamgirpur, Hastināpura (incorrectly cited on p. 3) and Chirand (cited on p.104) the statement that the history of the terracottas in the Gangetic valley does not go beyond 300 B.C. (p. 4) stands refuted. One feels that certain aspects of culture have not received due attention in the work. Some printing and other errors have crept in. For example, the caption of chapter II has also been printed on the pages of chapter III; on some pages the title of the book and that of the chapter have changed positions; and Sanskrit words in Roman script are without diacritical marks.

The get-up of the book is satisfactory. The illustrations are fairly representative and well-reproduced. The work augments the still relatively meagre literature on ancient Indian terracotta art.

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Lucknow

K.K. THAPLYAL

M. RADHAKRISHNA SARMA, Temples of Telingana—The Architecture, Iconography and Sculpture of the Cāļukya and Kākatīya Temples (Hyderabad, 1972). Pp. 307; 142 plates. Rs 75.00.

The Telingana region of Andhra Pradesh, rich with Cāļukya and Kākatīya temples, has not received due attention from art historians. The obvious reason is the inadequacy of published literature on the monuments of this region which, in turn, is the result of the absence of any serious exploration and study in situ in this promising area. The Chalukyan Architecture by Henry Cousens and The Chalukyan Architecture by Alexander Rea, the only two noteworthy publications on the subject, do not deal with the Cāļukya or Kākatīya monuments of Telingana. Though the Annual Reports of the Department of Archaeology of the erstwhile state of Hyderabad contain brief descriptions of some of the temples, there is as yet no serious study of the monuments of the region and no scientific attempt has been made to discern an architectural pattern and development in them. M. Rama Rao's short monograph on "Select Kakatiya Temples" is too brief and merely descriptive, confining itself to only a few of the several monuments. The present work on the temples of Telingana by Dr Radhakrishna Sarma is an improvement over the earlier publications mentioned above, even though its tenor is more descriptive than critical and analytical.

The book is divided into five parts. The first part is introductory in nature, briefly dealing with the geology and geography of the Telingana region and the fortunes of that area under the Cāļukyas of Badami, Lemulavāḍa and Kalyāṇi and the Kākatīyas. The second part deals with as many as 45 sites which contain architectural monuments, the more important among them being Hanumakoṇḍa, Warangal, Palampets, Ghanapur, Jakaram, Pamagal, Piḷḷalamarri, Ālampūr and Vēmulavāḍa. The third part discusses the architecture of the monuments in the light of architectural texts and provides details regarding site, ground-plan, adhiṣṭhāna and upapīṭha, stambha, walls, doorways, prastara (entablature), ceiling and superstructure. The vāstu and other texts quoted in this part include the Brhatsaṃhitā, Śilpaprakāṣa, Śilparatna, Śaivāgamanibandhana, Īṣānaṣivagurudevapaddhati, Aparājita-prēcha, Mānasollāṣa, Māyamata, Kāmikāgama, Mānasāra and Tantrasamuccaya. These texts were composed at different periods and in different regions and sufficient caution is necessary in applying them to a consideration of the architectural style of a restricted zone like Telingana. The fourth part deals with the sculptures in the monuments in their iconographic aspect, while the fifth provides a description of the plates in the book.

The book contains a fairly good amount of research material, though its appreciation is rather inhibited by the methodology followed by the author. After referring to the location

of a site he proceeds to give an account of the inscriptions in the temple and describe its architecture. It would have been profitable had the author attempted an analytical discussion of the architectural style of the monuments in the region leaving the description of temples to a catalogue at the end. Though he has quoted extensively from various  $v\bar{a}stus\bar{a}stras$  in his discussion on architecture, no serious attempt has been made to correlate the quotations to the monuments of the region. If the monuments of a given area are to be studied to discern the architectural pattern in them, it is necessary to examine in detail such diagnostic elements as the \$ikhara, vinyāsasūtra, the elevation and roofs of axial additions, \$pranāla, mānasūtra, vitāna, gopuras if any, \$dhvajastambha, mahānāsika, superstructure rising over the central shrine, plinth terrace, \$prākāra\$ and \$toraṇa\$. The stylistic affiliation of the monuments can be determined only by an examination of these details.

The discussion of the sculptures in the monuments in the region is detailed enough to include iconographic features, though nothing is said about the stylistic trends of the age. The popularity of the Mahiṣāsuramardinī image in Telingana and its typological varieties are brought out in detail. The author has made a judicious selection of plates which are got-up well and given brief and useful notes describing them. The bibliography at the end is comprehensive. It is possible that as several monuments have been taken up for examination the discussion is not detailed in all cases; but as an attempt to study a group of temples of the Cāļukya and Kākatīya periods in the Telingana region in a more comprehensive manner than what has been done earlier, this book is to be welcomed by all interested in art history.

Madras T. V. Mahalingan

AMITA RAY, Art of Nepal (Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. 78; 103 illustrations, 20 in colour, Rs 40.00.

Here is a compact monograph on the art of Nepal. The author states in the preface that the book has been designed to serve as an introduction to the art of Nepal. It introduces us to Nepal's architecture, sculpture, bronzes, wood-carvings, terracottas and painting. Representative and significant specimens of Nepal's art have been presented in their historical, stylistic and aesthetic aspects. But more than that by her integrated approach to art, which is not just descriptive but attempts to understand art in its social and cultural context, the author succeeds in presenting a brief cultural history of the art of Nepal.

Art in Nepal as well as in India of the ancient times centred around religion. In early times, however, religious images were without articulate shape and form, as in primitive cults. In fact influences from India were what gave shape, form and name to gods in Nepal. Nepal's religious life, of her patrons of art especially, was largely influenced by religious movements in India such as Mahāyāna Buddhism, Smārta-Paurāṇic brāhmaṇism and finally the tantric versions of both Buddhism and brāhmaṇism. Hence Nepalese religious art derived from Indian religious art its themes, iconographical proportions, formal qualities and stylistic aspects. Art of Nepal, at least in its early days, is basically art of India trans-

ferred to another land, acquiring in course of time Tibetan and Chinese influences, but which slowly adapted itself to the cultural setting of Nepal.

Indian influences on religion and art of Nepal can mainly be accounted for by trading contacts and political relationship between the two countries, as also by their geographical contiguity. At various periods of history, from the third century onwards, different traits and traditions of Indian art from different regions of India infiltrated into Nepal. Thus the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta traditions of the Ganga-Yamuna valley, especially of the Mathura school, and the Vākāṭaka and Western Cālukyan traditions of the Deccan influenced art in Nepal. From the eighth to the 13th century Nepal had close trade relations with eastern India and Tibet. Traders were accompanied by monks and their associate artists carrying with them icons, paintings and manuscripts. The eastern Indian school of art strongly

influenced the sculpture, bronzes and painting of Nepal during this period.

Indian art styles had longer existence in Nepal than in the land of their origin. Change was slow in the cloistered cultural setting of Nepal. The arts of stone sculpture, bronzes and painting were mainly used in the service of religion and were controlled by monks and priests in the seclusion of monasteries and temples. They were but remotely related to the life of the common people of Nepal. Even terracotta figures on the 16th-18th century temples were not directly connected with the common people. While examining sculpture, Dr Amita Ray points out that one would look in vain for local influence on imported art form and theme even in the ninth and 10th centuries. Instead there was strict adherence to Indian forms and iconographical canons by Nepalese artists. Even physiognomical forms and ethnic types did not show local characteristics. From the 13th century onwards, when India was overrun by iconoclastic forces, Nepal had to increasingly fall back on her own resources. It is from this period, as the author says, that the compositional scheme of the reliefs, their plastic treatment and architectural features, the ornaments and decorations of the figures and their physiognomical form became all directly attributable to the contemporary life of Nepal as it had been conditioned by centuries of Indian life and culture. The eastern Indian forms and styles were prolonged, but Nepalese traits were gradually visible. Slanting eyes and slightly high cheek-bones, characteristics of Nepalese ethnic type, are noticeable in both sculpture and bronzes from this period onwards.

But architecture, being essentially functional and related to the needs of the people and the soil, easily lent itself to indigenous influences. Dr Amita Ray's attempt to link architecture and town-planning with the social structure of Nepal is noteworthy. The social structure of the kingdom was based on tribal pyramids, each with a chieftain at the top. The settlement pattern of the village or city reflected this social pattern in having the chieftain's house or the king's palace as the nucleus. The author has described the general features of town-planning, settlement patterns of various communities, domestic architecture, palace complex and public shrines. Important stapas, caitya-vihāras and brāhmaṇical temples of the Kathmandu valley have been described showing their Indian, Tibetan and indigenous Nepalese elements. The typical features of Nepalese architecture, both domestic and religious, are its construction in wood or bamboo and slanted roofs rising upwards like a tower in a number of receding tiers. According to the author it is not unlikely that the type was evolved out of the domestic architecture of Nepal. The meticul-

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ously carved wooden brackets, struts, eaves, windows and doors, for which Nepal is well-

As the art of Nepal is primarily religious in theme, there is a chapter on the religion and pantheon of gods and goddesses which will be useful to readers in understanding Nepalese iconography.

University of Bombay Bombay

DEVANGANA DESAI

K. L. BARUA, Studies in the Early History of Assam, ed, M. Neog (Asam Sahitya Sabha, Gauhati-Jorhat, Assam, 1973). Pp. 342; 5 illustrations, 2 maps. Rs 20.00.

The work under review contains a collection of articles (including review notes) by the late Rai Bahadur K. L. Barua (1872-1940), the celebrated author of the Early History of Kāmarūpa (Shillong, 1933). The number of notes, which are mostly very small in size, is 93. Of these seven appeared in the Indian Culture, Calcutta, and the rest in the Journal of the Assam Research Society, Gauhati, of which Barua was the founder-editor. There is an appendix containing the first two chapters of Barua's incomplete autobiography and an introduction by Dr Neog dealing with Barua's life and work. The book, especially some of the notes, will be useful to students of the early history of Assam.

Although P. N. Vidyavinod's Bengali introduction to his Kāmarūpašāsanāvalī is the most illuminating essay on the chronology and political history of ancient Assam, the credit for popularizing the study of both the political and cultural aspects of the early history of the land goes to Barua. While reading Dr Neog's account (p. ix) of the late Professor D. R. Bhandarkar's review of Barua's Early History of Kāmarūpa in the Indian Culture, i, no. 1 (July 1934), the writer of these lines remembers how he was in those days a research scholar attached to Professor Bhandarkar and helped his teacher in reviewing Barua's work in the Indian Culture as well as V. R. Dikshitar's Mauryan Polity and Harbilas Sarda's Maharana Kumbha in the Indian Antiquary. Dr Neog refers (p. x) to a review in which Barua's book was rightly regarded as a distinct contribution to the study of early Indian history but at the same time also as exhibiting a spirit of chauvinism running through it. He further points out that, in a reply to the said review, Barua admitted the emphasis put by him on the glories of Kāmarūpa wherever it was due (in his opinion of course) because the people of the land were proud of their past. It is, however, doubtful whether the approach is suitable for a scientific investigator of historical truth.

Some of the notes in the volume relate to controversies on problems discussed in Barua's Early History of Kāmarūpa. One such topic is associated with the theory that ancient Kāmarūpa included wide areas of north Bengal and east Bihar as far as the Kosi river in the west (pp. 67 ff., 81 ff., 101, 102, etc). The theory is based on the identification of the river Kauśikā, mentioned in the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman, not with the

Kusiyara in the Sylhet district (now in Bangladesh) but with the Kusi or Kosi in Bihar. In reality, however, there is no proof that the Prāgjyotiṣa or Kāmarūpa country extended in the west beyond the river Karatoyā which is known to have been often mentioned as the boundary between that country and the Pundravardhana territory comprising considerable areas of north Bengal including at least as far as the Dinajpur district in the north. It has also to be remembered that the Kusi or Kosi is believed by scholars to have formerly joined not the Ganga in Bihar, but the Karatoyā or the Brahmaputra in north Bengal.

In Dr Neog's interesting introduction mention should have been made of the fact that the Dubi plates of Bhāskaravarman and the Uttarbil (Howraghat) plates of Balavarman III were carefully edited in the *Epigraphia Indica*, xxx, 278-87, and xxxii, 283-92, respectively and not merely of the perfunctory edition of the former record in the *Journal of the Assam Research Society* (vol. xi, July and October 1944) and of the latter in the *Asam Sahitya Sabha Patrika* (vol. xv).

We recommend the book to lovers of the early history of Assam.

CALCUTTA D.C. SIRCAR

N. RAMESAN, Studies in Medieval Deccan History (Based on two new unpublished copperplate inscriptions of the State Museum, Hyderabad), Archaeological Series No. 29, ed, Md. Abdul Hamid Khan (Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1972). Pp. 188. Rs 26.00.

This volume is a critical edition of two important copperplate charters, of which one, though known already, had not been published till now and the other is a new find. The Chitrur plates of Pallava Nṛpatuṅga, which constitute the first copperplate inscription edited in this volume, were noticed by Robert Sewell long ago in his List of Antiquities in the Madras Presidency, ii, 30, as being available in the Collector's office of North Arcot district, but these were not taken up for editing and detailed study as their subsequent whereabouts were not known. The Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh, has done significant service by arranging for the acquisition of the plates and their publication.

The Pallava charter is of more than ordinary importance for the fresh light it throws on certain aspects of the history of the Pallavas and the challenge it provides to certain views being currently held on a few problems in their history.

Firstly, it mentions in unambiguous language that Narasimhavarman built a sayyāgṛha (sleeping house) of stone in the ocean for Viṣṇu. From the place given to him in the Pallava genealogy in the plates this king can be identified with Narasimhavarman I. Thus according to the inscription the shrine of the abhicāra form of the reclining Raṅganātha in the shore temple complex at Mamallapuram was constructed by Narasimhavarman I, though there is evidence to indicate that the two Siva shrines were built under Narasimhavarman II Rājasimha. This information is significant because it repudiates the view that Narasimhavarman I Māmalla had nothing to do with any of the monuments at Mamallapuram.

Longhurst, who made a study of these temples, thought that the Visnu temple was a later addition since it does not conform to a unified ground-plan of the three temples, while Percy Brown felt that on account of their unconventional groupings the place of the supplemental shrines in the shore temple complex is a little difficult to comprehend. This evidence regarding the shrine of Ranganātha confirms the opinion of scholars like K. V. Soundara Rajan that the image of the reclining god in the shore temple complex and the chamber enshrining it may be chronologically anterior to the two Siva shrines near by (Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India, 1962-5, pp. 177-8). It is possible, if the evidence of the Avantisundarīkathā of Dandin is to be believed, that the hand of the Vișnu image, which was broken, was replaced by an architect called Lalitaditya during the days of Rājasimha. Rājasimha himself provided a structure over the reclining image, as may be seen from an inscription on the lintel of the shrine which reads narapatisimhavisnuggham, which on palaeographical grounds may be assigned to the eighth century (ARE, 1966-7, no. 188). Another point of interest brought to light by this charter is that Prthvimanikkam, who was hitherto held to be a queen of Nrpatunga, appears to have been in reality the queen of Parañjaya, a Bāna subordinate under Nrpatunga.

The curious statement in this copperplate that Nandivarman (who may be Nandivarman II) was the son of Parameśvaravarman (II) probably by his second queen, who was possibly a daughter of Hiranyavarman (p. 39), leads to complications in framing the genealogy of the later Pallavas. For one thing, it is a matter for consideration whether Hiranyavarman, who also belonged to the Pallava family on the male side and was, therefore, a Bhāradvājagotrīya, could have given his daughter in marriage to Parameśvaravarman II, who also belonged to the same gotra, though they were six generations apart. If he did, does this point to the existence of sagotra marriages at the time? Further, it is held on the basis of evidence available to us elsewhere that after the death of Parameśvaravarman II there was no direct heir to the throne and that Nandivarman II of the collateral branch was elected king. That Nandivarman (II) was the son of Hiranyavarman and ascended the throne is clear from the Kasakudi, Tandantöttam and Pattattālamangalam plates of Nandivarman II, the Vēlūrpāļaiyam plates of Nandivarman III and the Vaikunthaperumal temple label inscriptions. The Udayendiram charter is the only record which mentions Nandivarman as the son of Parameśvaravarman (tasya parameśvaravarmanah putrah) and hitherto scholars who could not reconcile this version with that contained in other inscriptions viewed it as an aberration. But the information provided by the present Chitrur plates adds a new dimension to the problem and supports the version in the Udayendiram plates. If, however, it is taken that Nandivarman was a son of Parameśvaravarman II by a daughter of Hiranyavarman and there was not much difficulty in his succession to the Pallava throne, it is difficult to explain how and why there was opposition to him. tion to him, as gleaned from the Vaikunthaperumāl label inscriptions though it may be that these still await satisfactory interpretation. The interpretation of the term ubhaya kula in the Vaikunthaperumāļ label inscriptions as referring to both the branches of the Pallava family (p. 52) requires reconsideration since the main and collateral branches of the same line cannot be called two separate kulas.

The author has discussed in brief the administration and taxation system under the Pallavas touching upon such aspects as the territorial divisions of the kingdom, the village administration and details of the concessions granted. The broad details contained in the plates are clear, though it appears that the readings given in a few places in the Tamil part of the inscriptions admits of some revision. The object of the charter is the grant of the village of Chitrur for settling 54 brāhmaṇas there; it also mentions that as the village was already a devadāna to Perumpidugu Pallavēśvaragrha, the village Parugaļūr was named

as a substitute devadāna for the same Perumpidugu Pallavēšvaragrha.

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Another set of copperplates, the Mallāvaram plates of Parāntaka, a Cōla viceroy of Vengi, is also edited in the volume. The charter, dated 1116-7, starts with a conventional account of the ancestry of the Eastern Cālukyas and, as in all their copperplates, the years of rule of each king of the dynasty starting with Kubja Viṣṇuvardhana are also furnished. In the historical portion the grant describes the birth and reign of Kulottuṅga Cōla, his conquest of the Cōla region and the elevation of his sons, Mummaḍi Cōla, Vīra Cōla and Parāntaka Cōla, to the Eastern Cālukya throne. The inscription thereafter records the grant of land to 284 brāhmaṇas and describes the boundaries of the village. The most important light thrown by this set of copperplates is on the system of land tenure prevalent in medieval times. What is apparent from this charter is that an agrahāra grant did not confirm title to the ownership of the land, but gave merely title to the income and produce of the land, that it was always open to the king who was the owner of the land to resume it and regrant it, or divide it to suit the convenience of the time (p. 122).

The present publication thus throws useful light on the political, social and economic history of early medieval and medieval south India. The author and the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh, deserve the grateful thanks of

everyone interested in these aspects of the history of this region.

Madras T. V. Mahalingam

KISHORI PRASAD SAHU, Some Aspects of North Indian Social Life (1000-1526 A.D.) (Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1973). Pp. xx+306. Rs 45.00.

Scholars in medieval Indian history are seldom conversant with both Sanskrit and Persian-Arabic texts. Dr Kishori Prasad Sahu appears to be no exception. He has gathered materials from Sanskrit sources, which barely cover five pages. Not a single source in this language has been cited for social life between 1200 and 1526. He quotes long passages from Albīrūnī on the caste system, but nowhere does he corroborate them with digests and commentaries in Sanskrit. No light has been thrown on numerous mixed castes, fasts, rules of marriage, property rights of Hindu women other than saudāyika or on forbidden food and drinks for brāhmaṇas as mentioned in original texts in Sanskrit. Had he consulted works like the Tīrthavivecana-kāṇḍa of Lakṣmīdhara, Dānasāgara of Vallālasena, Tristhalī-setu of Nārāyanabhatta, Gaṇgā-vākyāvalī of Vidyāpati (or Viśvāsadevī), his account of

places of pilgrimage for Hindus (pp. 235-6) would have been more comprehensive. It is sad to find him describing different forms of marriage (p. 190), marriage ceremony (pp. 191-2), various samskāras (pp. 194-5) and festivals (pp. 232-5) of Hindus entirely on the basis of Muslim writers and a Portuguese traveller.

The book is divided into six chapters of unequal length. Chapter I (pp. 1-28) seems to be the weakest of all. Loose statements have crept in at several places. As Albīrūnī did not refer to the Rajputs, the author arrives at the unhistorical conclusion that "it is no wonder that he ignored the Rajputs, their rise being a later development" (p. 10). In the same page he writes that there were Śrīvāstava Kāyasthas "throughout the length and breadth of India". Not to speak of this subsection of Kāyasthas, the Kāyasthas did not exist as a caste in Kashmir till at least the 12th century. It is also surprising that he makes Vidyāpati testify to "Hindu-Muslim" unity in Jaunpur (p. 28), though the Kīrtilatā of Vidyāpati brings out very clearly the antagonism between the two communities in that city. Further, it is not true that the 'ulamā remained a very influential section in society throughout the middle ages (p. 15). Their influence declined in the reigns of 'Alāu'ddīn Khaljī and Muḥammad Tughluq. Haz. Sharf'uddīn Yaḥyā Manerī and Amīr Khusrau made bitter comments on the 'ulamā-i-dunyā. Chapters II (pp. 29-71) and III (pp. 72-124) dealing with food habits, dress, toilets, ornaments and housing of different strata of people are fairly well-written. The educational system is covered in chapter IV (pp. 125-83) and for the first time one gets an account of the curriculum of studies in medieval Orissa. Two remarks, however, may be made. First, he incorrectly points out that there was a university and a "special Chair of Logic" (p. 140) at Navadvīpa. Moreover, he is not sure of the date of establishment of "a university" at that place and suggests both 1503 (p. 138) and the 15th century (p. 139) as possible dates. Secondly, it is erroneous to hold that Nalanda ceased to be a centre of learning in 1205 (p. 141). The Biography of Chag-lo-tsa-ba-chos-rje-dpal (Dharmasvāmin) shows its continued existence in the first half of the 13th century. There are a few occasions when it is difficult to agree with the views of the author expressed in chapter V (pp. 184-223). His reference to Varthema's testimony on polyandry (p. 198) has no relevance to northern India, for that foreign traveller was alluding to the practice among some Calicut women. It is also wrong to presume that "during the period under review, the practice of sati became obligatory and binding in nature" (p. 202). In fact Albīrūnī, whose view has been quoted by the author himself, stated that old women and mothers of children did not become satīs. Moreover, the Madanapārijāta, though defending the system, observes that it was optional for widows. Again, the Parāśara-Mādhavīya and the Vivāda-cintāmaņi recommend the vow of chastity for a widow and performance of yearly funeral offerings to her husband. A widow's right to property is discussed in several digests of the period covered by the author. Apart from the perfunctory review of Hindu festivals, no comprehensive description of Muslim festivals has been attempted in chapter VI (pp. 224-56). The author has imposed to the strength of the s has ignored the observance of the birthday of the Prophet, which has been described by Ibn Batūta. There should be a been described by Ibn Batūta. There should have been more discussion of music at least on the basis of the Lahjāli-by Professor S. H. Askari in several articles. Dr Sahu writes only one sentence about sama:
"The Sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis and the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis a series of the sufis also had a great still a series of the sufis and the sufis a series of the sufis and the sufis and the sufis a series of the sufis and the sufis a series of the sufis and the sufis and the sufis and the sufis a series of the sufis a series of the sufis and the su "The Sufis also had a great liking for music, known as 'sama', which was especially practised

on the occasion of 'urs' " (p. 239). He is probably not aware of the clear rules about sama' or auditions in Ṣūfī assembly.

Had the author been uniformly cautious and up-to-date the bibliography compiled by him would have been very useful. Qutban's patron was Husain Shāh of Jaunpur and not "Hasan Shah, the father of Sher Shah" (p. 262). The reviewer does not agree with the author's dating of Krttivāsa Ojhā, Narasimha Mehtā and Bhālaṇa. The extent of interpolations in the extant works of Vijaya Gupta, Krttivāsa Ojhā, Bipradāsa Piplāi, Chānd Baradāyī and Padmanābha has not been discussed.

There are innumerable printing mistakes, some of them jarring, for example, Bhalhan (everywhere) for Bhālaṇa, Mansollasa and Mansolasa (pp. 34, 44, 266) for Mānasollāsa, Chhibimohan (p. 28, fn. 100) for Kshitimohan, paisaka (p. 190) for paisāca, V. C. Majumdar (p. 289, no. 127) for R. C. Majumdar, D. C. Sarkar (p. 291, no. 170) for S. C. Sarkar. Unfortunate are the wrong insertions like The Delhi Sultanate, ed, K. M. Munshi (p. 289, no. 140), and History of Bengal, ii, ed, R. C. Majumdar (p. 289, no. 128). Diacritical marks have nowhere been used.

On the whole there is hardly any doubt about the author's immense labour. The work will be useful for scholars interested in the sources on social life found in the vernacular literature of the period. Collection of data is the marked feature of the work, which was originally a Ph.D. thesis approved by the University of Ranchi, Bihar.

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B. P. MAZUMDAR

H. K. SHERWANI, History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1974). Pp. xxiv+739. Rs 120.00.

The attractively printed, interestingly written, most comprehensive and voluminous history of the Qutb Shāhī dynasty of Golconda by the veteran scholar Professor H. K. Sherwani has appeared 18 years after the initial venture in the field by Professor Abdul Majid Siddiqui. Professor Siddiqui, in his unpretentious smaller work published in 1956, made an attempt to write a continuous history of the eight Sultans of the dynasty, who ruled over Golconda from 1496, the date of assumption of the governorship of Telingana by Sultan Qulī Qutb-u'l-Mulk, to 1687, when Abu'l Ḥasan Qutb Shāh, known also as Tānā Shāh, was defeated and sent as a prisoner to Daulatabad fort and Aurangzeb annexed the kingdom of Golconda to the Mughal empire. It might have occurred to many that there was still a need to compile a more complete and very carefully documented history of Golconda by one who was in command of and had fully mastered the source materials and was well-equipped to produce a critical and exhaustive work on the subject. Professor Sherwani, who has devoted about five decades of his life to the history of the medieval Deccan and produced a large number of articles and books on various aspects of the Qutb Shāhī dynasty, was immensely qualified to undertake the task. The volume has turned out to be the latest and perhaps the best of his works, a product of mature scholarship.

Professor Sherwani has based his book on primary sources, mainly official and unofficial contemporary chronicles, records, letters and other documentary data. He has also extensively used literary works in Persian and local languages, travelogues and epigraphic and numismatic evidence. Towards the end of the work the author has attached an annexure, having seven sections, listing therein the vast amount of historical data which he consulted and utilized. He has not given a mere catalogue of sources tapped, but has also indicated their main features and described the range and quality of all that was available to him for this study. Besides, there are at the end of each chapter extensive explanatory notes. In fact the overall impression is one of a surfeit of evidence and a certain lack of sense of proportion in regard to the contents and treatment. The account is, however, fairly convincing and quite readable.

The book has seven chapters, each of which is sub-divided into a number of sections. The treatment shows a combination of the chronological and the topical. Besides a brief preface, a table of contents, indication of transliteration, abbreviations, an extensive and classified bibliography and an adequate and useful index the book has been provided with a genealogy of the Qutb Shāhī rulers, maps, a lay-out of the principal buildings of Hyderabad at the time of Muḥammad Qulī Qutb Shāh and a plan of the battle of Bannihatti, wrongly called the battle of Talikota. Not the least valuable part of the book consists of a portrait of Sultan Qulī Qutb-u'l-Mulk in the frontispiece and 16 photo-plates of the archaeological remains of Golconda reproduced on pages 544-5. The notes accompanying these photographic reproductions give to the book an added historical importance and bear testimony to the author's extraordinary knowledge of Qutb Shāhī architecture. However, reproduction of the portraits of other rulers in the Dakhni and other qalams and a note on the painters would have enhanced the usefulness of this study.

The book is a veritable storehouse of accurate information concerning many matters of historical interest and importance. Besides the political narrative there is a good deal in it of the social milieu, social groups, rural and urban life, customs, manners, dress, educational and religious institutions, contemporary literature in Persian and Telugu, rise and growth of Dakhni Urdu, economic situation, coinage, weights and measures, wages, price levels, roads, sea-routes, trade and industry, administrative system, military organization and progress of art and architecture period-wise which helps us in making a comparative study of the many-sided developments in chronological order. The author portrays a society of communal harmony and concord. He shows how Muslim rulers used to appoint Hindus to the highest posts in civil and military administration, reposed utmost confidence in their loyalty and never hesitated to send them to fight against their co-religionists. But the repeated and excessive emphasis laid on this aspect of socio-political life of the Qutb Shāhi dynasty smacks of special pleading and reduces the value of the work as a piece of research.

Professor Sherwani has challenged many prevailing views and adduced ample evidence to support his contentions. It is not possible, in the space at our disposal, to mention more than a few of these points or recount all the popular beliefs that he has attempted to disprove. For instance, he has shown that the founder of the family was not the scion of a royal family of Hamadan and Azarbaijan and that the Qarā Qūyunlū tribe of Turkmans to which he belonged did not possess a glorious background of royalty as is

generally supposed. The word Sultan, he says, was a part of his name and not an emblem of regal position. Further, it was not a single episode, but the cumulative effect of a number of episodes under the Bahmanid Sultan, Muhammad III, surnamed Lashkari, which led to his gradual rise to power. The author rejects the single evidence of Ferishta that the founder of the dynasty declared his independence in 1512, following a proclamation of their kingship by other governors of Maḥmūd Shāh Bahmanīs uch as Nizamu'l Mulk, Ismā'īl 'Adil and 'Imad-u'l-Mulk. The epitaph on his tomb and other evidence establish that he never formally declared his kingship or assumed regal title and was known only as "Bade Malik" or senior nobleman. The author has convincingly proved that it was Ibrahim Outb Shāh (1550-80), the youngest of the children of the founder, and the fourth of the eight members of the dynasty, who asserted his independence, assumed the royal title and issued coins in his own name. In fact neither of the three preceding rulers, Sultan Ouli Outb-u'l-Mulk (d. 1543), Yar Qulī Jamshed (1543-50), and Subhan (1550) declared their kingship and assumed royal dignity. We are also told that Sultan Quli was not the founder of the characteristic architectural style of Golconda and that the principle of eclecticism, synthesis and fusion was evolved long after his death. According to Professor Sherwani a series of campaigns were undertaken at his command not in 1522 but a couple of years before the death of Isma'il 'Adil Shah. He says further that the tradition about Ibrahim nominating his third son, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, the fifth of the dynasty (1580-1611), was an after-thought and his accession was the result of a palace intrigue. About Ibrāhīm Qutb Shāh the author says that the kingdom was at its zenith under him and that not only in diplomacy and military campaigns, but also in many other matters his reign was unique in the history of Tilang. As he puts it:

He is the first ruler who is definitely called a king by his contemporaries, the first to whom at least some coins can be definitely traced, the first who is given a royal name on his tombstone and the first who patronised Telugu learning such as few other

potentates have done since (p. 121).

The author has also discussed the famous battle of Bannihatti (January 1585) and questioned its being labelled as the battle of Talikota, in which the Hindu state of Vijayanagar was jointly attacked by the league of the four Sultans of the Deccan. Historical, topographical and documentary data have been furnished to prove that the so-called battle of Talikota was fought 12 miles south of the Krishna at Bannihatti on the confluence of the Maski river and its southern tributary, the Hukkeri. The writer does not find anything surprising in the statement that the battle ended in less than four hours; he stresses the point that it was not a communal war and maintains that the battle of Bannihatti did not mean the end of Vijayanagar, as Professor Siddiqui would have it.

Despite the unusual care which appears to have been exercised for accuracy of details and for avoiding printing errors, the work is not devoid of minor slips and flaws. There is a list of errata (41 in number), which is not complete. Some slips are as follows: appeals for appears (p. 12); Pindars for Pindaris (p. 13); Jem for Jam (p. 17); Shahy for Shahi (p. 72); Naigwaris for Naikwara (p. 226); suspicious for auspicious (p. 409); Tozuk for Tuzuk (p. 442); Swāleḥ Kambō for Salih Kamboh (p. 561) and M'azzam for Mu'azzam (p. 643). On page 106 the date 1546 is wrongly given as 1540; on page 95

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we get a strange expression "The state over which he ruled manifold..." It is for the writer to say which of the variants, Ingalgi and Ingulgi, on pages 145, 231, 147 and 148 is correct. The name of the coin or pagoda has been invariably spelt as hons and not huns. Differing longitude and latitude of taluqa headquarters in Usmanabad district (18°16'N, 75°27'E. on page 57 and 18°15'N. and 77°30'E. on p. 111) has been given to a place spelt variously as Ausa, Ossa and Oussa). There are a few errors of punctuation also. However, the few slips which the reviewer has ventured to point out in no way detract from the general excellence of the book. The presentation is on the whole accurate and thorough, though the price is rather forbidding.

PATNA

S. H. ASKARI

I. H. QURESHI, The Administration of the Mughal Empire (Reprint, N. V. Publications, Patna, 1973). Pp. 340. Rs 35.00.

Based on an extensive study of original sources and thoroughly documented, it is a very readable general account of the administration of the Mughal empire during the period 1556-1707. As the author of an earlier work on the administration of the Delhi Sultanate, Professor Qureshi is advantageously placed in tracing some of the Mughal administrative procedures and designations to the preceding period and specifying the modifications made in them by the Mughals.

The chapters have been arranged along the usual lines—the emperor, imperial household, the central government, the manṣabdārī system, armed forces, agrarian and judicial administration, provincial government, etc.—but they are written in a very lucid style and give an integrated account of the overall set-up as well as the individual departments. Chapters III (Imperial Court and Household) and VII (Departments of Justice, Hisbah and Police) may be cited as instances.

The former touches upon the problem of the distinction (even though not always evident in practice) between the officers of the household and those looking after the general administration. Reference has rightly been made here to the preface of the A'in-i-Akbarī wherein Abu'l Fazl sets forth his basic ideas about the nature of kingship, structure of the administrative machinery and the four groups of king's advisers—(i) nobles of the state, (ii) assistants of victory, (iii) companions of the king and (iv) servants.

The point needed a little more detailed discussion. Abu'l Fazl characterizes the first group as the warriors ("illuminating the battlefield with the halo of devotedness, they make no account of their lives") and the second one as the civil servants ("the collectors and those entrusted with income and expenditure"). On the other hand members of the third group are not exactly servants of the state, for they included not only the şadr, mir 'adl and  $q\bar{a}z\bar{\imath}$ , who served the state and were paid by it, but also the poet, philosopher and astronomer. This classification should be borne in mind in order to understand the arrangement of the A'in-i-Akbar $\bar{\imath}$ , but books on Mughal administration generally do not mention, much less discuss, this arrangement and proceed to describe rather mechanically the various departments.

The other chapter describes the three different branches of the judiciary— $qaz\bar{a}$ ,  $maz\bar{a}lim$  and  $siy\bar{a}sat$ , and explains the procedure adopted for dealing with different types of cases. Regarding the muhtasib, the author maintains that even though the  $\bar{A}'in$  does not mention this office probably it existed under Akbar and that the  $\bar{A}'in$  assigns to the  $kotu\bar{a}l$  some of the functions of the muhtasib (p. 203). But during the later Mughal period it appears that the duties of  $ihtes\bar{a}b$  were performed by the  $q\bar{a}z\bar{i}s$ . An  $akhb\bar{a}r$  of Farrukhsiyar's reign records that the public of Purnea had represented that the local  $q\bar{a}z\bar{i}$  and  $muft\bar{i}$  had hoarded thousands of maunds of grain and other commodities and as the duty of  $ihtes\bar{a}b$  appertained to them they sold the grain at their desired price.

In two long appendices the author has examined the two controversial topics of the working of the A'in-i-Dahsāla (pp. 261-80) and the ownership of agricultural holdings (pp. 281-94). In the former the author defends his own translation and interpretation of the relevant text of the A'in (published earlier in an article) which was criticized by Irfan Habib (The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1963, pp. 191, 204,208 and notes). The reviewer not having a specialized knowledge of the topic and not having seen the early manuscript copies of the A'in-i-Akbari is not in a position to comment on the textual aspect of the problem, but it does seem that even though the evidence on the point is not conclusive Professor Qureshi's contention that the process of calculating 10 years' averages was a continuous one and that the arrangement had a "built-in device of constant revision of sehedules by adding the 'medium' produce of the latest year and taking out the eleventh year (working backwards) [and] was used to bring the demand rates up to date" needs further consideration. It may also be pointed out in this context that N.A. Siddiqi (Land Revenue Administration of the Mughals, 1970, pp. 54-5) quoting the Diwan-i-Pasand (compiled in the early 19th century) on some of the prevalent methods of assessment describes one under which the village jama' was assessed "on the basis of the estimated jama' for the current year...the arrears and receipts for the last year, the comparative jama' figures for the preceding ten years...."

Regarding the other problem, Professor Qureshi maintains that the peasant had full proprietory rights in his holding. In fact this seems "so manifest" to him that he wonders why "any contrary opinion should have been held at any time". The position is, however, not so obvious. The evidence put forward by Professor Qureshi, except for the remarks of Al-Birūnī and the theoretical formulations of Māwardi which related to a much earlier period, has already been examined by Irfan Habib (op. cit., pp. 111-8) who rightly poses the question whether the substance of the "peasant's right was such as to deserve the application of the term 'proprietory' in its strict juridical sense". The peasant's obligation to cultivate the land and the state's right to force and punish him for not doing so are constantly referred to and asserted in the contemporary chronicles and documents and these certainly constituted restrictions on the absolute ownership of the land by the peasant. Professor Qureshi admits these restrictions but tries to explain them away as a public duty which in no way affected the substance of ownership. Absence of adequate documentary evidence on the point is another difficulty which he ignores.

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The select bibliography does not refer to recent work done in India on Mughal administration or to collections of documents available in the country or recently brought to light. This apart, it is quite useful.

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QEYAMUDDIN AHMAD

S. N. SINHA, Subah of Allahabad under the Great Mughals (1580-1707) (Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 1974). Pp. xii+238. Rs 25.00.

In recent historiography of medieval India there has been a welcome recognition of the need for detailed regional studies. Dr Sinha's work is an attempt to fulfil such a need in relation to the saba of Allahabad which formed part of the very heartland of the Mughal empire and was of crucial significance to the empire in many ways. Within the saba Dr Sinha has attempted a sarkār and pargana-wise study of various aspects of its history. Of the six chapters in the book four deal with the political events of the saba, the fifth deals with its administration and the last with the economic condition. There are seven appendices accounting for nearly a quarter of the book and ranging from the lists of subedārs, faujdārs and a pargana-wise list of forts to the average agricultural efficiency of the saba.

Dr Sinha has diligently collected information from various sources, particularly the chronicles, the accounts of foreign travellers, the dastūru'l-'amals and the Akhbūrūt. One, however, regrets to note the absence of any reference to the Allahabad Documents, so essential to the study of agrarian history of the region to which Dr Sinha has otherwise devoted so much attention.

It appears that Dr Sinha's effort has mainly been to put together information regarding the political, administrative and economic aspects of the history of the suba and in the process he has broken some new ground. Thus he has given a detailed season-wise break-down of a number of crops cultivated in different areas of the suba (pp. 141-5). He has also worked out the average agriculturale fficiency of the suba crop-wise, season-wise and area-wise (pp. 146-7 and 198-200) on the basis of the A'in-i-Akbarī and given figures for the total cultivated area, the assessed revenue and the amount of revenue alienated in the form of supurghāl in each sarkār of the suba.

Unfortunately, however, Dr Sinha has not examined many significant questions which his own study throws up. Thus, for example, he shows that while there was a fivefold increase in the area under cultivation in the sūba during the 17th century (pp. 148-9), the increase in revenue was only twofold (pp. 130-1 and 134). As a bare statement of facts, these figures do not reveal much unless one examines the reasons for this discrepancy. This is particularly so when we keep in mind that the 17th century witnessed the establishment of a "more effective administration" through the further splitting up of the maḥāls from 171 in 1594 to 269 in 1707 (p. 134) facilitating a better maintenance of revenue accounts, and that there was considerable rise in agricultural prices in this period (see Irfan Habib, Agrarian System of Mughal India, Bombay, 1963, pp. 82-9) which would certainly

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have inflated the assessment figures. Could the discrepancy be due to the extension of cultivation in low-fertility areas? A comparison of the tables on the additional areas brought under cultivation (pp. 148-9) and on the agricultural efficiency of the regions (pp. 198-200) would show that the areas with very high fertility in the reign of Akbar were precisely the ones which showed the largest amount of addition to the lands under cultivation during the 17th century except for sarkār Kalinjar. Could it then be due to the cultivation of low-value crops in the additional areas? Dr Sinha's area-wise statistics on the crop patterns (pp. 141-5) would refute this hypothesis also, for the crops are quite evenly distributed over the various sarkārs. One wishes that Dr Sinha had tried to answer this question.

In using revenue statistics for determining the fertility of land one has, of course, to keep in mind that not all the cultivated area in practically any region was included in the official records. None the less, one could still make certain rough-and-ready generalizations, as Dr Sinha has done (p. 146). But with various types of data being available such as the revenue assessment figure per bigha (pp. 153-4), the detailed prices of agricultural commodities in the  $\bar{A}$ 'in, the crop patterns in the various parts of the suba, the ratio of revenue assessment figure to the actual produce, the minimum and maximum amounts of revenue due from each  $sark\bar{a}r$  and the actual amount of land (recorded to be) under cultivation (pp. 150-2), it should have been possible to establish not merely the ratios of fertility of land in different areas (pp. 146-8) but the actual fertility, even though with the reservations that the nature of the evidence demands.

The few generalizations that Dr Sinha makes are not all borne out by evidence. Thus, for example, he states:

From the time of Akbar onward, the jagirs were transferred periodically and as such the same mahal, or a group of mahals, which were in jagir in a particular year was declared in khalsa next year and vice versa (p. 106).

But in the footnote he writes:

The names of the jagirdars (1526 to 1694) of the Subah indicate that the jagirs were mostly assigned in Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Kurrah, Fatehpur Haswa, Sarharpur, Kalinjar, Manikpur, Jhusi, Arail, Allahabad and Akbarpur Sanjhauli.

Aren't the two statements contradictory to each other? If certain areas get earmarked for the grant of  $j\bar{a}g\bar{\imath}rs$  through practice of over nearly two centuries and the other areas presumably get earmarked as  $\underline{kh}\bar{a}lis\bar{a}$  lands, how can the principle of transferring one type of land to another every year remain operative?

However, Dr Sinha's book remains one of the pioneering works in regional histories of medieval India. He has very ably shown—and for the first time—how the revenue statistics can be effectively used for determining the fertility of land. His lists of subedars and faujdars are extremely useful for further research.

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HARBANS MUKHIA

The Indian Historical Review

HAMEEDA KHATOON NAQVI, Urbanisation and Urban Centres under the Great Mughals, 1556-1707 (Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1971). Pp. x+210. Rs 20.00.

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on urbanization under the Great Mughals, though Dr Mrs Naqvi's claim to have explored an original theme (preface, p. vii) is unwarranted as a large number of scholars have worked on its various aspects. Among these mention may be made of S. S. Kulshrestha (*The Development of Trade and Industry under the Mughals*, 1526-1707, Allahabad, 1964) and A. I. Chicherov (*India: Economic Development in the 16th-18th Centuries*, Moscow, 1971), who have extensively dealt with topics covered by Mrs Naqvi.

Influenced by the "Islamic" school of historians, the author overemphasizes the role of Muslim rulers and religion in urbanization in the country. In her view India witnessed "a higher level of urbanisation" only after "direct contact with the Muslims as rulers" (pp. 2-3). She maintains that till the end of the 12th century there were only villages and small towns and that large towns had appeared only occasionally (p. 2). Had Mrs Naqvi carefully gone through the available literature on early Indian towns or at least consulted a few books and articles such as B. N. Puri, Cities in Ancient India (Meerut, 1966), Uday Narain Ray, Hamāre Purāne Nagar [in Hindi] (Allahabad, 1968) and R. S. Sharma, "Decay of Gangetic Towns in Gupta and post-Gupta Times", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1972, she would have been more cautious and less sweeping in her remark. The author speaks of "the uninterrupted identification of Muslim sovereigns of India with urbanisation" (p. 15) and regards urbanization as "one of the major themes on the agenda" (p. 1). She has, however, failed to provide any figures or statistical data regarding the degree of urbanization and the success achieved by individual Mughal emperors in the non-Hindustani region of the empire on the basis of the so-called agenda.

Even as an interpretative essay, Mrs Naqvi's work does not throw light on any significant trends conducive to the growth of towns during the period under study. Her contention that Islam could have been helpful in the growth of towns and in attracting people of low castes to urban centres is by itself weak ground to summarize upon. Notwithstanding its egalitarian base, Islam could have only marginally ameliorated the socio-economic condition within the religious framework. Even more superficial is Mrs Naqvi's identification of the cause of the decline of urban centres which she thinks to be political instability; there is no proper analysis of the process of dialectical materialism within the urban structure which struck at the very root of economic viability. If these centres had been "economically viable", they would have certainly withstood the political turmoil and upheavals of the times as the rural areas did.

To say all this is not to deny the well-established fact of urbanization under the Great Mughals. Mrs Naqvi, however, ought to have studied, albeit tentatively, the demographic trends in the period, the growth of at least major individual towns and the degree of urbanization in the "non-Hindustani" region of the empire to which she confined her study. She nevertheless deserves praise for her comprehensive approach, detailed and exhaustive references to original contemporary Persian sources and accounts

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of foreign travellers and precise information on various topics of study in the form of tables. Admittedly the book represents one point of view. The printing is very good and mistakes negligible. The bibliography, however, should have included some notable books and articles which have an important bearing on the subject.

DYAL SINGH COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

ISHWAR PRAKASH GUPTA

Marwar-ra-Pargana-ri-Vigat of Nainsi in Rajasthanil, ed, N. S. Bhati, Vols. I-III (Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur, 1967-74).

Pp. xl+602; viii+501; 560. Rs 43.50.

Dr Narain Singh Bhati's edition of the Vigat in three volumes introduces to historians a hitherto inadequately noticed excellent work on the 17th century history of the Marwar (Jodhpur) state. The first volume (1967) contains the account of the parganas of Jodhpur, Sojat and Jaitaran. The parganas of Pholodi, Merta, Siwana and Pokaran have been covered in the second volume (1968). The third volume (1974) contains the summary (in Hindi) of the seven parganas as given by Nainsi, notes on important clan leaders and places of historical interest in Marwar, glossary of technical terms and index.

The writer, Muhnot Nainsi, served as hākim and des-diwān during the reign of Maharaja Jaswant Singh (1638-78). Being associated with the higher administration, he had a very intimate knowledge of the administrative and fiscal affairs of the state. In a way the extent of information available to Nainsi about the Jodhpur state can easily be compared with what Abu'l Fazl had about the Mughal administration in Akbar's reign and there is no doubt that the Ā'in-i-Akbarī inspired Nainsi to write the Vigat. As the Ā'in contains detailed information—geographical, political and fiscal—on all the sūbas of the Mughal empire and their administration in all its aspects, the Vigat also gives a detailed account of the parganas of the Marwar state and its tappas (tafah). Even villages which provide information on various historical aspects have not been ignored.

The author's account appears to be fairly objective. If he is not convinced of the truth of some past event, he makes it abundantly clear by prefacing his statement with the phrase: ek bat youn suni chheh, that is, "it is so heard". He does not own responsibility for the historical truth or otherwise of that particular event. Similarly in the case of information on some contemporary event being gathered from sources other than by himself, Nainsi has fully identified these sources giving particulars like their names, dates, etc. Where convinced of the truth of an event, he has boldly described it without resorting to any of the above two methods. He also writes with authority on matters with which he was personally associated or well-acquainted. Nainsi's detailed description of the campaign against Jaisalmer in 1658 in which he participated as the chief commander of the Jodhpur army and his account of the manṣabs and jāgīrs held by the Rathor rulers, the jama' of each pargana as determined by the emperor, the rekh as determined by the raja, the hāsil of villages between 1657 and 1662 and their geographical and agrarian details may serve as examples.

Nainsi has described in the Vigat various economic, social and administrative aspects and the political background of the parganas of Jodhpur, Jaitaran, Sojat, Phalodi, Merta, Siwana and Pokaran of the Marwar state. The work begins with pargana Jodhpur, but the account is not exclusive and includes facts concerning other parganas as well. The result is a brief but systematic history of the Marwar state and the nature of Rathor rule there. The author briefly goes into the period before the arrival of the Rathors and then traces the expansion of their dominion and the evolution of their rule. It is clear that in the beginning the Rathor prince was given only the right of bhog (land revenue—māl) for the security of the inhabitants of the area and that this arrangement of mutual contract was different from the relationship of the conqueror and the conquered. But with the gradual increase of Rathor authority, this link loosened and the Rathor prince became the leader of Rathor sardārs of various small territories. This later developed into the relationship of bhā'i-bandh-chākar.

The account of the times from Maharaja Udai Singh (1583-95) to Jaswant Singh is in greater detail and more balanced. It throws significant light on the political situation at the time of Akbar's entry into Marwar. It also contains a detailed account of the manṣabs and  $j\bar{a}g\bar{v}rs$  granted to the Rathor rulers from the time of Akbar to Aurangzeb. One of the most striking features of the Vigat is that in its tables of manṣabs and  $j\bar{a}g\bar{v}rs$  the salaries paid under the  $z\bar{a}t$  and  $saw\bar{a}r$  ranks have been separately recorded along with the manṣab. This description of the manṣabs and  $j\bar{a}g\bar{v}rs$  is of great help in understanding the relations of the Rathor rulers with the Mughal state and provides an insight into the working of the manṣabdārī system.

Though Nainsi includes in his introduction to the pargana of Jodhpur the history of the occupation of other parganas of Marwar by the Rathor rulers, in the introduction to each pargana Nainsi has given its brief but systematic political history before and after the arrival of the Rathors. We have in effect a separate history of each pargana, though Jodhpur remains the focal point. As the history of each pargana has been linked to the chain of events in the Mai war state, the Vigat provides useful material for understanding the

system of government there during the 17th century.

The Vigat describes the position and role of the various officers in the administrative hierarchy from the pardhān, des-diwān and shiadār to hākim, qānungo and amīn. It contains the figures of the jama' of each pargana, on the basis of which the Mughal emperor used to grant jāgīr to the Rathor rulers. Besides, the statistics of the rekh of each village under a pargana and the hāṣil from the land revenue between the years 1657 and 1662 have been recorded. Reference is made to the 'amal-dastār in its account of the parganas of Merta, Sojat and Pokaran. The nature and ratio of bhog (māl) and kharach-bhog (jihāt) realized by the state from the peasants have been described it it. The system of land revenue collection—balai and zabt—as well as the officials responsible for its realization have been dealt with in great detail. Along with the rekh and hāṣil of each village for five years, Nainsi furnishes its geographical description, means of irrigation and the castes inhabiting it.

Despite its being such an important historical source, the Vigat has not been used for writing history. L. P. Tessitory was the first historian to mention its manuscript in his book, Bardic and Historical Survey of Rajputana (Calcutta, 1947). Later Munsi Devi

Prasad, G. H. Ojha (Jodhpur Rajya, Ajmer, 1938, i, 440), and Kalika Ranjan Qanungo (Studies in Rajput History, Delhi, 1952, p. 88) referred to this work, yet none of them used it in their writings. Speaking before an audience at the University of Calcutta in 1966 (published as Lectures on Rajput History and Culture, Delhi, 1970), Professor Dasharatha Sharma presented for the first time a few historical aspects of the book. In spite of all this, the Vigat really came to light only after the publication of its first volume in 1967.

The two transcribed copies of the Vigat (in Rajasthani) available in the collection of the Shodh Sansthan, Chanpasni, Jodhpur, form the basis of Dr Bhati's edition of the Vigat. One of these belongs to the first half of the 18th century and the other to the latter half of the 19th century. As the editor himself says, the first copy of the manuscript forms the real basis of the present edition, whereas the second has been used as a supplement to the first or for providing additional information (Vigat, i, Introduction, 38). Dr Bhati has taken great pains in finalizing the text in its present form. Being a scholar of Rajasthani. he has given the meaning of difficult words or terms which enable a common reader to follow the text. His historical background has been useful in defining some of the technical terms which otherwise could not be properly interpreted. Moreover, not satisfied with a mere translation of various Rajasthani terms, he has clarified, remarkably well, certain doubtful events by citing supporting historical facts from other contemporary and near contemporary accounts. The editor has also appended to the original text certain extra information on the parganas which had not been given by Muhnot Nainsi. These have been culled from other contemporary and near contemporary documents. Perhaps the purpose of the editor has been to provide a comprehensive study of all the parganas of Marwar on the basis of the available information. But he has not disclosed the names of sources from which the relevant information has been taken, though he has referred to places where they are available. For this reason the information, although significant from the historical point of view, may create doubts in the minds of researchers about its authenticity. The glossary of technical terms and other information given in the third volume are very useful for scholars of the history of Rajasthan.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY NEW DELHI G. D. SHARMA

SATISH CHANDRA, Uttar Mughalkāleen Bhārat Kā ltihās (1707-1740) [in Hindi] (Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1974). Pp. viii+260. Rs 30.00.

The book, besides presenting a political history of India from the death of Aurangzeb (1707) to the invasion of Nādir Shāh (1739), deals mainly with the evolution of the emerging forces amongst the Sikhs, the Jats, the Rajputs, the Marathas and the court nobility and their impact on the fortunes of the Mughal empire and scientifically analyses the causes of its disintegration against the background of social and economic developments. It takes in its stride the fast changing scenes in Panjab, the Jat country, Rajaputana, Bundel-

khand, Malwa, Gujarat and the Deccan. The tribal activities in the Afghan hills and the political upheavals in the regions adjacent to the north-west frontiers of the Mughal empire, which rocked the Indian sub-continent, have not escaped the author. He treats them all as links in a great tragedy that was enacted in Delhi and its main characters, the Mughal emperors and their wazīrs, chief nobles at the court and the imperial subedārs, Hindu rajas and the Peshwas, are presented with a flourish which leaves the reader aghast.

The book covers almost the same period of Indian history (1707-40) as that covered by William Irvine's monumental work, Later Mughals (1707-39). But the difference lies in treatment and the source material. Later Mughals, though voluminous, rich in details and profuse in dates, was mainly based on the Persian sources as most of the Marathi, Hindi and Rajasthani-Hindi source material which later came to light was not traceable at the time. Fortunately when Sir Jadunath Sarkar edited the Later Mughals (1921-2), he skilfully wove the information from the Marathi letters and reports into the main text, but even then much of the information contained in the Hindi and Rajasthani works and records remained untapped. Meanwhile many a research paper, excellent monographs and theses were written and published, and fresh historical source material in Marathi, Hindi and Rajasthani kept coming up. Professor Satish Chandra had access to all this source material which he first utilized in 1959 in his well-known book in English, Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740. Most of these historical sources have been used in the book under review as well, as the author himself so candidly admits in the preface. Therefore, it has become as much authoritative as its forerunner, though its canvas is wider than that of the latter.

Professor Satish Chandra has judiciously trimmed many details which find place in Irvine's Later Mughals to concentrate more on the reflective side of the theme and successfully avoided any overlapping in the accounts of the two. Yet he has omitted nothing of consequence. His narration is compact and without unnecessary digressions, his treatment logical and conclusions enlightening and thought-provoking. The book is written in simple yet flowing and lucid style and is very readable. It contains 12 chapters which are divided into many sections. Besides the glossary of important administrative terms commonly used in the Mughal empire, a very up-to-date bibliography of the Persian, Marathi, Hindi, Rajasthani-Hindi and the English source material, an index and a list of the dates of important events add to the merit of the book.

The notes and references are given at the end of every chapter, instead of at the foot of every page, and are serially numbered. This practice, though a little inconvenient to the reader, saves space and paper. But the retention of the numerals in English in numbering the pages and notes and their use even in dates and years look somewhat awkward in this Hindi book, more so when many paragraphs and sentences are begun by some date or year put in numerals in English. This should have been avoided. A little more care in proof-reading would have saved the trouble of adding an errata at the end. However, these are minor lapses and do not detract a whit from the merit of the book. The printing is neat, paper and binding lasting, and the general get-up good.

To sum up, Uttar Mughalkāleen Bhārat Kā Itihās fills a long-felt gap in historical literature available in Hindi and the author has rendered a singular service by presenting a critical survey of this crucial period of Indian history (1707-40) for which he deserves our congratulations.

JHANSI

BHAGWAN DAS GUPTA

ZAHIRUDDIN MALIK, A Mughal Statesman of the Eighteenth Century, Khan-i-Dauran, Mir Bakhshi of Muhammad Shah, 1719-1739 (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1973). Pp. viii+120. Rs 6.00.

Dr Malik's work on <u>Khān-i-Daurān</u>, the Mīr Bakhshi of Muḥammad Shāh, is a welcome addition to the existing literature on the later Mughals. It analyses the politics and parties that developed at the Mughal court after the death of Aurangzeb and brings out certain new facts and offers fresh interpretations of some known facts. The work is based primarily on contemporary Persian chronicles and has extensive footnotes.

Though avowedly a biography, the study does not limit itself to the life-story of Khān-i-Daurān. This is evident from the fact that out of a total of seven chapters only two have direct bearing on his life and career, character and personality. In the remaining five chapters the biographical notices are ably interwoven with informative and refreshing discussion on the contemporary politico-administrative problems.

That any debate on the religious policy of Aurangzeb is not only futile but takes us further from the correct evaluation of the factors responsible for the decline of the Mughal empire has long been convincingly established by Satish Chandra and Irfan Habib. Dr Malik takes this view forward and examines the role of the individual nobles in the evolution of new Mughal policies.

The author believes that in overlooking the claims of Asad Khān, the old Wazīr, and making Mun'im Khān, who had fought for him, the motive power of the administrative machinery Bahādur Shāh set a bad precedent which was followed by his successors, Jahāndār Shāh, Farrukhsiyar and Muḥammad Shāh. The result was an accentuation of friction among the nobles. This is a simplistic explanation for a complex process. What Bahādur Shāh did was quite in keeping with the prevailing political norms. Aurangzeb had promoted Mīr Jumla to the office of the Wazīr as a reward for the latter's services in securing the throne for him. It is probably for this reason that apart from Zu'lfiqār 'Ali Khān, whose inordinate ambitions are well-known, not a single important noble voiced opposition to Mun'im Khān's appointment as Wazīr. Even Zu'lfiqār Khān and Asad Khān concurred, though reluctantly.

Chapter III on the crisis of the old order and chapter IV on the rival factions at the court provide some new dimensions of information not available in the existing literature on the Mughal court politics in the earlier half of the 18th century. Chapter III gives a brief but perceptive account of the rise of new groups to eminent positions in politics and administration and their responsibility for the malaise. Dr Malik states:

These men, now raised to the status of nobility, were, by and large, of low descent, having no background of military training or administrative experience. They also lacked the special qualities of manners and court etiquette which were required of government servants in these days (p. 50).

One wonders if the author has been unconsciously swayed by the biased accounts of the contemporary "Turani" chroniclers such as Irādat Khān, Mirza Muḥammad and Āshūb, who looked upon the Indian entrants into the nobility with contempt. Men like Mīr Mushrif, Chhabela Rām, Girdhar Bahādur, Amīnuddīn of Sambhal and Ruhu'l Amīn Khān of Bilgram who had recently risen to the higher echelons of the Mughal nobility had sufficient background of military and administrative experience. They were by no means of "low descent".

Dr Malik's assessment of the nature of factional fight among the nobles is a definite departure from current evaluations. According to him it was ambition for individual glory rather than racial strains or any debate on the character of the state that shaped their political behaviour.

While it is true, as the author shows in his chapter on the Marathas and the Bundelas, that Khān-i-Daurān pleaded for the policy of peace with the Marathas, the nature of reconciliation that he wanted to be finally adopted needs more investigation. Earlier their incorporation into the Mughal nobility had created problems. To pursue the same policy in the face of mounting pressure on jagirs would hardly have secured support from any quarter. The second alternative open to him was to concede greater autonomy to them, but this was, at least theoretically, incompatible with Mughal centralism. A study of conflicts between contemporary notions of centralism and localism, in theory and practice alike, would be extremely valuable. Dr Malik's view about Khān-i-Daurān's attitude to the zamindars in general is interesting. The author, however, seems to have relied principally on the evidence of Āshūb who had obvious prejudices against Khān-i-Daurān's conciliatory policy towards the Jats. One of the first important steps that he took as the Mīr Bakhshi of Muhammad Shāh was to replace Sa'ādat Khān by Jai Singh in the governorship of Agra. Sa'ādat Khān had failed to make any impression on the Jats. Hence at the instance of Khān-i-Daurān Jai Singh was appointed in April 1722 to lead an army against them. This attitude of Khān-i-Daurān, who was in political alliance with and a personal friend of Jai Singh, is quite understandable. For Jai Singh would never let the rising Jats flourish on the periphery of his ancestral territory.

Dr Malik has given undue importance to the role of individual monarchs and nobles in the existing political and economic malaise. Failure of a healthy and fruitful policy towards the Marathas and the crisis that eventually overtook the empire on the eve of Nādir Shāh's invasion of India, for instance, are ascribed chiefly to the opportunism and self-aggrandizement of the nobility and above all to the incompetence of the reigning monarch. Arguing along these lines, the author holds that Khān-i-Daurān's measures of compromise could not be carried out fully owing to the stiff opposition of the Wazīr and that even when they were implemented they could not resolve the problem, for both Khān-i-Daurān and the Wazīr had different policies which were not born of any genuine convictions. In such a situation, the author believes, it was the emperor's responsibility to

encourage a positive policy, but Muḥammad Shāh failed to handle the affairs of a great empire in a great crisis. That these factors also contributed to precipitating the disruption is undeniable, but they were not the main causes. The Marathas could not be reconciled because the Mughals could not meet their inordinate demands with their limited resources. Further, to concede their demands would have meant the virtual liquidation of the Mughal authority in Malwa and Gujarat for which the emperor was not yet prepared.

The Mir Bakhshi occupied a pivotal position in the administration of the Mughal provinces. The governors kept him informed about political and economic developments and made representations for military assistance, payment of money to the soldiers and award of jāgīrs to themselves. He also received despatches from the Waqā'i nawīs at the headquarters of the ṣābas and sarkārs. Though Dr Malik does not discuss Khān-i-Dauran's relations with the provincial governors, his remark that "on many occasions Khān-i-Daurān refused to provide assistance to governors and misrepresented their requests" (p. 107) is extremely illuminating. This might have contributed to the growth of "new subedari" in the provinces with whose governors Khān-i-Daurān had strained relations.

There is no justification for the manner in which the author has transcribed some of the proper names, e.g., A'itsam Khan, A'itmad 'Ali Khan, Ahtasham Khan and Ahtram Khan for I'tiṣām Khān, I'timād 'Ali Khān, Iḥtisham Khān and Iḥtirām Khān (pp. 45, 48 and 102).

It may not be possible to agree with everything that Dr Malik says, but serious students of political and administrative history of the first half of the 18th century will find a great deal to learn and admire in this book.

Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi MUZAFFAR ALAM

JEAN DELOCHE (ed), Voyage en Inde du Comte de Modave. 1773-1776 (Ecole Française D' Extreme-Orient, Paris, 1971). Pp. 597; 11 maps. Price not stated.

The admirable edition of the travels of the Count of Modave in India by Jean Deloche (earlier work: Researches sur les Routes de l'Inde au temps des Mogols, 1968) is extremely valuable for looking afresh at the fluctuation of fortunes in 18th century Hindusthan. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has utilized the account of Modave (only the Archives Nationales copy, which is incomplete; see also his partial translations in Bengal Past and Present, 1936, and Islamic Culture, 1937) in his Fall of the Mughal Empire, while contemporary writers like Voltaire and Abbé Raynal were greatly influenced by the close observation and prolific writing of this less known French wanderer of 18th century India. Deloche's chief contribution lies in collating texts from different archives to produce a composite work. There are inevitable repetitions (Modave's citation of Bernier and his constant looking back to Aurangzeb and the history of the Mughal empire are examples) owing perhaps to the scattered nature of sources and the attempt by the editor to present a theme as far as possible. His annotation

on the basis of contemporary and later accounts of European travellers only perhaps lacks incisiveness and the questioning attitude and depends, therefore, on the strength of the subsequent writers, some of whose views may have become obsolete through later findings. Also, the rich French factory sources of the 18th century have been entirely omitted in the annotation, as for example in the account of the gruesome famine of 1770 in Bengal by Modave (p. 63) which could have been corroborated by the contemporary French Company letters (see the letters of Chevalier in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, N.A.Fr. 9366). In the annotation on the reference of Voulton (omitted in the index, pp. 479-80) no mention is made of his book on Nadir Shah's invasion (see my article in this Journal, i, no.1, 85-97); nor is his biographical sketch given; S.R. Sharma is mentioned (p.275, fn. 1), but not A. Athar Ali (Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb); Jadunath Sarkar's Mughal Administration is cited (p. 314, fn. 1) in respect of judicial administration but no reference is made to Z. Siddiqui's article entitled "Qazi under the Mughals" published in Medieval Miscellany, i, 240-59, even though that article would have brought out the bias of Modave. That this bias was very much there could be seen from the chequered career of Modave, particularly in relation to the French Company. Actually Modave should have been looked upon as one of the last of a line of French historiographers of medieval India which has not been done by the editor.

Louis Laurent de Féderbe, Count of Modave, was born in France on 25 June 1725. His father was a colonel in the French army. Modave, fighting in all the wars from 1743 to 1748, became the aide de camp of Prince de Conti and was decorated with the order de St. Louis. Taking a hand in writing a book, he published anonymously from Amsterdam in 1756 a translation of the Wars of Succession of the Marquis de San Philippe. As aide de camp of Lally, he came to India in 1757 and participated in the capture of Fort David and the siege of Madras. His marriage next year brought him wealth but perhaps no happiness. Arriving in France in 1760, he presented a detailed plan on India to the minister, who after shelving it offered him the governorship of Karikkal. By that time both Karikkal and Pondicherry had fallen and Modave, without money, landed at Nagapattinam in April 1762. His attack on Madras was halted at Madurai and with the armistice in 1764 he was criticized at home for such a rash attempt. Returning to Madagascar, he attempted colonization there, suspended since the massacre of the French in 1674, but had to give it up in 1770 on orders from home. Receiving his second failure calmly, Modave landed at Balasore on 2 October 1773 and went to Shujauddaulah at Faizabad. Hunted by the English, he went to Delhi and secured a jagir and employment under René Madec. But Madec's failure to contain the Jats, then revolting against Najf Khan, cost Modave both his position and the jagir. Having failed for the third time, Modave went to Hyderabad (excellent description of the route) and tried to get the support of the Pondicherry governor. Finally, he got a post under Balasat Jang for 600 rupees, which was sufficient for maintaining himself and his armed retainers. Moving again towards Masulipatam, he died on 22 December 1777 a miserable man, deserted by the French in India. His abundant reports, letters and fragments of journals, meticulously collected by Deloche, are a testimony to his brilliance, his plan of aggrandizement for the French power in India (see also S.P. Sen, The French in India, ii) and his acute observation which separates him from the usual run of French

military adventurers and travellers/merchants of the period which was marked by Anglo-French hostility and the decline of Mughal power.

Although in his rather terse reports and letters Modave makes geographical errors which Deloche finds embarrassing (pp. 25-6), his topographical details, particularly on the course of the Ganga and the Ghaghra, go beyond those of Tavernier and Rennel, His description of the rainy season of Bengal is on the model of Bernier and precise ("Bengal is a veritable sea then", pp. 54-5); he refers to the technique of navigation on the the Ganga and observes that "the canal of Jalangi becomes less navigable each year because of the sand being collected there continually" (p. 55). But according to Modave the loss of navigability by the Hooghly later did not prevent Bengal from being one of the richest countries in the whole of Asia. In Calcutta he saw not less than 500 vessels queuing up to export "unbelievable amount of fabrication of cloth and muslin", mainly to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf (pp. 59-60). He refers also to English efforts at interference with the system of production through their agents (p. 61). He considers rice to be the best in "the Indies" and so abundant as to support long-distance trade (the technique of transportation is also given on p. 63), which sometimes becomes the cause of famine such as that of 1770 despite the "wise precautions of the government" (p. 63). Modave says: "this famine was one of the longest and the most cruel that had ever visited any people"; it "carried away two million people", half of the present population (Ibid). After describing other places of Bengal he describes Calcutta, including Fort William (pp. 73-82), whose strength had been underestimated by the French governor, Chevalier (Chevalier's letters should have been cited here also). Describing Calcutta, including Holwel's black hole monument, he notes the "confusion" of buildings, which were without proportion (see the Bengali translation by Tarit Mukhopadhyay in Itihas, 3rd year, nos. 2 and 4, naturally omitted by Deloche). A few of these were in bricks; others were in bamboos. He found Calcutta costly. A mediocre house cost three to four hundred rupees per month and a big house 30 thousand rupees per year (p. 79). After describing the towns around Calcutta including Chandernagore he comes to Hooghly, which he noticed was in total decline (pp. 84-5). He found, however, a part of the ditch, rampart and some old pieces of cannon as well as a faujdar and Muslim theologians, including Haji Mustapha, translator of Siyar-ul Mutakharin, residing in misery and splendid faith. After giving a cursory account of Murshidabad, Kasimbazar and the wealth of the seths he passes on to the pitiable condition of the Nabob of Bengal, then 16 or 17 years old, and the drain of wealth from Bengal which had a rather easy-going population of not less than five million (pp. 116-7).

Modave's voyage from Bengal to Delhi in 1774 (part II) on a bazra constitutes an interesting account by itself. His description of the route up to Patna and the misery that he saw on the way is illuminating. An aspect of Patna worth noticing in his account was the commerce in saltpetre and opium with salt coming in large quantities from the Coromondel coast to be re-exported to different parts of Hindusthan (pp. 132-3). Taking a palanquin for onward journey from Patna, Modave has drawn a vivid picture of the market towns en route Faizabad. Faizabad itself has been described in great detail (pp. 143-7). The sudden death of Nawab Shujauddaulah forced Modave to relinquish his project of countering the English and he moved on to Delhi (p. 167); meanwhile Asafuddaulah who succeeded

scandalized everyone by making his khansama a noble (pp. 158-9). The English intervention is a familiar story and need not be repeated here. Modave's financial difficulties were over when several Frenchmen, including the famous Le Gentil, paid for his journey to Delhi (p. 170), the account of which is marked by the description of the towns, including Lucknow and Agra (pp. 194-201), the Ganga, the technique of irrigation and the system of agriculture, different sights on the route including the fort constructed by Danishmand Khan, protector of Bernier, at Bari (pp. 204-5). His description of Delhi (pp. 228-37), on the same model as that of Tieffenthaeler, whom he knew, throws new light on the condition of Mughal India in the 18th century against the background of the Jat-Rajput-Mughal conflict. Modave's audiences with the Emperor Shah Alam (p. 217) and ministers did not, however, bring any favour to him, except the khilat, although letters exchanged with the King of France call for a liaison and consequent support (224-7). It is interesting that on the whole Modave finds Bernier's account valid (pp. 228, 288-9), although in points of detail he does notice his mistakes (thus the walls of Delhi were of stone and not of bricks as stated by Bernier, p. 233). His account of two-storeyed houses, wells full of stale water, the richest merchants still living in Chandni Chowk, the different and costly merchandise for sale, the cooking and sale of food in the streets, the agreeable sherbet in ice and the comparatively low price of provisions (p. 233) agrees with that of Bernier. His statement that boats were not plying in the Jamuna for transportation to Mathura (p. 237) is an interesting pointer to the decline of internal commerce.

Modave's account does not, however, throw any new light on Shah Alam (part III) except the information regarding 500 women in his harem and the pitiable condition of the princes (pp. 263-4), the daily allowance of some of whom varied from two to five rupees while the three brothers of the emperor got only Rs 300 per month for their maintenance. Four times pillaged in recent memory, Delhi, like the empire, was in ruins (pp. 267-8). The golden throne had been replaced by one of wood, a symbol of the financial deterioration. It is perhaps to the credit of Modave, that even against this background of decline, while not doubting the ascendancy of the English, he does not designate them paramount power in India. Discussing the "crusade" of Colonel Dow for the conquest of Hindusthan (pp. 284-5), he hints at the national debt of England and the resources of India which could save the situation for the English (p. 283). At the same time he points to the desire of merchants and producers to have the English "peace and justice" in place of anarchy and oppression of the nobles. The military situation, where reform was urgently needed, was such that a handful of Englishmen were regarded by the Indians as the best soldiers in the world, something which would have been regarded as absurd in Europe (p. 312). Also, administrative principles, of which justice was one, had declined sharply (pp. 313-4). Although capital punishment was rare, mutilation was in vogue. Moreover, village folk were oppressed and there was no security in the cities (p. 313). Revenue farming was a common practice (p. 314); the peasantry suffered and lived on a "subsistence" level (p. 315). As regards land revenue, the "moderate" government took half but under the "mussalmane" government they were treated less favourably. "The portion they leave which is the quarter of the harvest, is again charged by all the expenses of the state, which reduced it to nearly nothing or only a little" (pp. 315-6). Troops were often employed for

collection although sometimes there was a negotiated settlement between the kotwal, principal men, revenue farmers and cultivators (p. 316). Refusal to pay the revenue demand, which was quite common, frequently led to pillage and fire. In actual cultivation iron points were sometimes used (p. 317) and irrigation seemed to be expanding (p. 318). It is unfortunate that Noman Ahmed Siddiqui's book, Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals (1700-1750) is neglected by Deloche in his annotation.

Modave refers to insecurity on the routes and mentions caravans of camels as a means of transportation. Each camel bore a burden of three to four hundred pounds and cost 90 to 110 rupees in Delhi and Agra (p. 328). The internal commerce was controlled by Hindu bankers who had their agents in "all the corners of the Empire" (p. 329). They utilized harkaras for communication, such as the one Modave used for sending goods from Delhi to Patna. It cost him 365 rupees, including insurance, and took three months to reach the destination (p. 330). According to Modave European merchants had enormous scope for trade in India because of its manufactures. Among articles sold or produced in the Doab region he mentions tobacco, cloth, salt, wine, wool and women. There were shops in Delhi and other big cities, where women were sold like "horses". These sales were supervised by the kolwal, who kept a register (p. 332). For the most part coins of gold, silver and copper were in circulation, but cowries brought from the Maldives through Bengal served as small money (p. 337). He describes the relative value of gold, silver and copper coins. Interestingly enough Modave linked the decline of commercial life with the decadence of the princely courts and their luxurious way of living (pp. 338-9). Even so his account of external trade of Hindusthan, particularly the fabulous export of Indian cloth to Persia and Arabia through the port of Surat (around 12 million Arabs wear Indian cloth, pp. 339-42), is impressive. Following Bernier, he gives an account of Kashmir (pp. 357-63) and the North-Western Frontier Provinces (pp. 363-70). Also, he gives a description of the princely states of the Rajputs, Sikhs, Jats and the Marathas which the editor calls Hindus, a category not used by Modave. While discussing these states Modave also makes a note of the administrative and military system of the Marathas (pp. 396-403). This should have been checked with the latest findings of scholars working on material in the Bikaner Archives, published regularly in the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress for the last few years.

Part IV brings out the well-known facts of the 18th century, interspersed by the intrigues of the French adventurers and officials and the ambition of the English. The role of Najf Khan, who later became Mir Bakhshi, becomes clear against the background of court intrigues and Modave's consistent demand of money for his favourite and unfulfilled project of driving out the English. Observing the decay of the empire (p. 456) and the possibility of the English conquirering Hindusthan (pp. 456-8), Modave travelled from Agra to Hyderabad on 24 June 1776 with a heavy sense of personal failure and frustration. The description of cities on the way, including that of Madopur under the Raja of Jaipur (p. 466), which was prosperous, and those of Kotah and Ujjain which were not ruined, makes interesting reading. The account of the Maratha countries, including that of Sindhia who was venerated everywhere (pp. 498-9), could be fruitfully used as a source on Maratha administration by scholars. His description of Burhanpur (pp. 510-1), pillaged by

the Marathas, could be contrasted with that of Tavernier, whom Modave docs not generally accept. Similarly his description of Aurangabad (pp. 518-24), including its waterpipes, throws light on the civic administration of pre-British cities. His account of Hyderabad (pp. 545-9) ends with the English plan of its conquest.

In outlining the pre-British agrarian system Modave falls a victim to the common illusion of European travellers since Bernier that land belonged to the sovereign alone and that the government was one of unmitigated tyranny—points silently passed over by Deloche. Modave, therefore, seems both an imperialist and a liberal, who wanted to substitute the English ascendancy (not yet complete) first by a French alliance with the emperor and later by a combined attack of the princely states on the Englishnone of which materialized. He, however, praises the English for introducing judicial and agrarian reforms in Bengal, where individual peasant could thereby own land and seek justice without recourse to the protection of the great. His description of the anarchical condition of Hindusthan and the decline of the traditional central authority is much closer to Bernier, whose analysis of the decline of the Mughal system seemed valid to Modave unlike the account of Tavernier, who had emphasized the splendour and growth of the Mughals. It is this bias which raises the issue of the validity of Bernier regarding 17th century India that the editor overlooks in his otherwise suitable introduction and notes. He has also allowed free play to Modave's unhistorical assertion of Aurangzeb's hate-Hindu campaign and the need for "law and order". In the two maps on the travels of Modave, prepared by the editor with immense thoroughness, villages, cities and markettowns crowd on each other. We are nevertheless grateful to the Ecole Française d'Extreme Orient for bringing us closer to an understanding of the roots of the transition of power and the limits of the traditional system in the nebulous second half of 18th century India as well as for leaving for once the oft-beaten track of L'Inde Classique and the pursuit of the golden Ind.

University of Calcutta Calcutta ANIRUDDHA RAY

P. SARAN (ed), Persian Documents, pt i, Text, Being Letters, Newsletters and Kindred Documents pertaining to the several States existing in India in the last quarter of the 18th Century, from the Oriental Collection of the National Archives of India (Asia Publishing House, London, 1966). Pp. 522 (Persian text and corrigenda) + 100. Price not stated.

The title of the book is rather bland and although the long sub-title gives some idea of the records and the time and territory covered by them it is not quite adequate. The volume contains the text of 234 akhbārāt relating to the political affairs of various Indian states during 1773-1803. The documents belong to the National Archives of India and have been published on its behalf by the University of Delhi. It is the first volume of the Persian series and other volumes have still to come out.

The documents are mostly intelligence reports (some very aptly titled  $a\underline{k}\underline{h}b\bar{a}r$ -i- $b\bar{a}\underline{t},n\bar{i}$ ) sent by the agents of the East India Company stationed in different parts of the country and usually forwarded through the Company's Residents in the courts of Indian rulers. These agents appear to have been highly placed men with connections in different Indian courts. They received very high salaries and were authorized to spend large sums at their discretion. Mīr Muḥammad Hāshim deputed to Hyderabad (p. 58 ff) and Nawāb 'Alī Ibrāhīm Khān, the judge at Banaras and a personal friend of Warren Hastings (p. 324 ff), provide two such examples, though not very typical ones. At the other end were the minor firy, moving all over the country in the garb of faqīrs. In fact the one overwhelming impression created by these documents is the sweep and intricacy of the network of these ubiquitous reporters and the minute details about everybody and everything which they transmitted to their masters almost everyday.

The bulk of the documents deals with four major topics—relations between the three south Indian powers (Marathas, Tipu Sultan and the Nizām) during the 1780s, the enthronement of Shāh 'Ālam II at Delhi with the help of the Marathas and the state of affairs in Panjab on the eve and during the course of Zamān Shāh's invasions. The akhbārs on pages 493-512 relating to French trading ships at Chandernagore constitute a distinct group, but, as the editor states, they could not be deciphered satisfactorily. They need collation with French records.

Within these broad categories there is a wealth of details. One gets a close-up glimpse of some leading personages. Take, for example, the incident of Shāh 'Ālam II falling ill (suspected poisoning) in July 1795. The reports (pp. 266-71) bring out the typical atmosphere of the time—prescription of unānī medicines accompanied with praye.s, distribution of sadqa and freeing of state prisoners, the tumult in the harem and bazars, the comments of the public on the incompetent likely successors, etc. More revealing is the report that Shāh 'Ālam II in a sort of death-bed appeal to Shāh Nizām al-Dīn, a successor of his pīr, had asked him to take care of his wife and children and enjoined him to see that the existing control of affairs by the Marathas continued and, if disturbances occurred, to move out of Delhi with the imperial wards. There is the dramatic scene in the camp of Daulat Rao Sindhia (1796) of an angry, abusive (the abuses are reported verbatim) confrontation between him and his close advisers following the receipt of a letter from Nana Phadnavis demanding the surrender of Tantia (p. 280 ff).

A more striking news item relates to the reported invitation by the Raja of Jodhpur to Tīmur Shāh in November 1789 to send a force towards Bikaner to release him from the bondage of the Marathas. Some of the Indian powers reacted to this move with some sort of a feeling of nationalism. The Sikh chiefs wrote to the Raja that he ought to have sought their help rather than invite Tīmur Shāh whose arrival would only lead to the "spoliation of Hindustan". Shāh 'Ālam II also wrote that the Raja would thus be causing his own ruin (pp. 331-2). On the other hand there is the report of Shāh 'Ālam later writing to Zamān Shāh stating that he had forgiven the misdeeds of Ghāzī al-Dīn Khān, his father's torturer, and was asking the Shāh to deliver him from the grips of the "kāfirs" (pp. 417, 429).

This draws attention to the problem of the limitations of such source materials and the need for their careful use. The reports were not always authentic; they often reprouduced

rumours without verifying them and ended with the traditional phrase, God is the Knower of Truth and the truth or falsity of the report rested with the narrator. Such reports, therefore, should not be quoted in isolation, as is often done, in support or refutation of a statement. Only a careful study of the bulk of such materials can give a correct idea of the "tortuous diplomacy" of the period and the often contradictory motivations of some of the leading personages.

Professor Saran has mentioned that the editing had to be done "in the brief intervals of time which the Editor could spare from his very heavy academic preoccupations..." (p. 10). Perhaps that is why the introductory note is all too brief (barely two-and-a-half pages) and leaves out so many things. It does not say anything about the Collection itself and one does not know how and on what basis the records were selected and arranged for publication.

It would have been helpful if at the beginning of the records dealing with the four major topics stated above a brief introductory survey of the general political situation relating to each of them had been added. Also, biographical details could have been provided about some of the more important personages mentioned in the text. The glossary and index of persons and places are useful, but in the latter case it should have been clarified that the references are to letter numbers, not pages.

By far the more urgent requirement is that the other proposed volumes should come out soon to make the series more meaningful.

PATNA UNIVERSITY
PATNA

QEYAMUDDIN AHMAD

R. K. SAXENA, Maratha Relations with the Major States of Rajputana (1761-1818 A. D.) (S. Chand & Co., New Delhi, 1973). Pp. x+286. Rs 35.00.

The author has given us a comprehensive survey of Maratha-Rajput relations from the third battle of Panipat (1761) to the inclusion of the Rajput states in the East India Company's political system (1818). The title of the book might suggest that the accent is on Maratha policies and activities. But in fact the narrative centres round the Rajput states and the Marathas occupy only the fringe of the stage.

As regards the sources utilized by the author, much greater importance has been assigned to Rajasthani materials than to the well-known collection of Marathi news-letters. Sardesai's Marathi Riyasat has surprisingly been put under the heading "Published Records". The bibliography mentions Sardesai's Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Khare's Lekh Sangraha and Rajwade's Itihasanchi Sadhanen, but the volumes which the author has actually used have not been specified. The subject demands a much more exhaustive and careful utilization of Marathi sources. The mention of Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (relevant portions) is practically of little use to the reader, for volumes are not indicated. On the whole the bibliography is ill-arranged and the classification of sources uncritical. It is in respect of Rajasthani source materials that the author has made a real contribution

to the advancement of historical knowledge. He has made use of records preserved in different archives in Rajasthan which—taken as a whole—were not utilized by any previous writer. The descriptive account of these records in the bibliography is useful and interesting and the author's direct acquaintance with them is reflected in copious references in the footnotes.

In chapter I (introduction) there are some curious statements. For instance, we read on page 3:

He (Rana Pratap) recovered the whole of Mewar excepting Chittor. He was succeeded by Rana Amar Singh in 1698 A.D. He formed an alliance with the Rajas of Amber and Jodhpur in 1708 A.D. for mutual protection against the Mughals.

Apparently there is some confusion here between Rana Pratap's son Amar Singh and another Amar Singh who became Rana of Mewar a century later. Again, we are told on page 19: "After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, Jodhpur became reconciled to the Marathas". Obviously the reference here is to the Mughals and not to the Marathas, for the latter had not yet appeared in Jodhpur.

Chapter II deals with the resentment of Rajput states over Maratha domination (1771-6). The author's treatment of Maratha-Rajput relations on the eve of Panipat (pp. 30-3) is very sketchy. It is not quite correct to say that after Madho Singh's defeat at Mangrol "the centre" of Maratha "activities was once again transferred to the sandy desert of Rajputana" (p. 39). The "centre" of Maratha activities during the decade after Panipat was the Doab and their principal aim was to establish control over Delhi which they succeeded in doing in 1771. The role of the Jats in Rajput-Maratha conflict deserved fuller treatment.

In chapters III, IV and VI the author shows how internal rivalries in Mewar transferred political control of the state to the Marathas. The causes of these rivalries are not explained; the narrative is merely a factual summary of political vicissitudes with their socio-economic backgroud being left unexplored. The working of the class system, the fluctuating relationship between the rulers and the nobility and the increasing impact of economic pressure released by the Maratha raids would have provided a theme helpful to the reader's understanding of events. The Marathas on the other hand also had their internal dissensions and could not fully exploit the opportunity afforded by the weakness of the Rajputs. The author rightly states, "There were scenes of disunity both among the Rajputs and Marathas and so none of them could capitalise upon the misfortunes of the other" (p. 85). This is well-illustrated in chapter VI which deals with the tussle for supremacy among the Maratha generals in Mewar (1792-1803). Mahadji Sindhia succeeded in establishing his ascendancy in Mewar during the years 1782-93 (chapter IV), but his successor Daulat Rao failed to control the rivalry of his lieutenants, Ambaji Inglia and Lakwa Dada, whose feud and greed brought ruin to Mewar (chapter VI). The rivalry between Sindhia and Holkar added a new factor to the story of confusion and destruction. The Rajputs, however, failed to subordinate their jealousies to "the over-riding objective of clearing the sacred land of Mewar of the Maratha invaders" (p. 150).

The affairs of Jaipur and Jodhpur form the subject-matter of chapters V and VII. Mahadji Sindhia's campaigns are described in some detail (pp. 106-24), but more details

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about the activities of George Thomas and Perron should have been included. Chapter VIII deals with the Rajput states and the second Anglo-Maratha war (1802-5). The treatment of a significant development of British policy—Wellesley's treaties with Jodhpur and Jaipur—is inadequate. The impact of his treaties with Sindhia on political developments in Rajasthan is not explained.

Chapters IX and X cover the period 1805-18. A full chapter has been assigned to Amir Khan's ascendancy over the Rajput states, a subject which is hardly more than a side issue so far as the author's theme (Maratha-Rajput relations) is concerned. Chapters VIII-X could have been given a much more satisfactory shape if the records in the National Archives (which the author mentions in the bibliography) had been better utilized. Chapter XI, entitled "Summary and Conclusion", does not add anything to what the author has said in previous chapters. The author's strong point is his wide acquaintance with Rajasthani source materials from which he has drawn many hitherto unknown details.

Jadavpur University Calcutta A. C. BANERJEE

M. P. ROY, Origin, Growth and Suppression of the Pindaris (Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1973). Pp. xvi+355; 2 maps. Rs 50.00.

The Pindaris have very rightly been described as "the very scavengers of Marathas" arising "like masses of putrefaction in animal matter out of the corruption of weak and expiring states" and all appearing to share "in the ignorance, the meanness, the rapacity, and the unfeeling cruelty, by which they were, as a body, distinguished". They dominated the stage in the history of Malwa, Rajasthan and the adjoining regions during the period commonly known as gardi ka waqt, which immediately preceded the establishment of British domination there in 1818.

Even during the period following the second Anglo-Maratha war, when the British were following a policy of non-intervention, the British Residents at the courts of the Peshwa and Sindhia had begun reporting details of the activities of the Pindaris, as they had become powerful adjuncts to the forces of Sindhia and Holkar. Later when they began to threaten or attack the British territories or those of their subsidiary allies detailed reports about them became a vitally important matter of routine and these reports went on increasing in details and length with the growing involvement of the British in the Pindari affairs. Thus the records in English relating to the Pindaris are not only detailed, very comprehensive and voluminous, but are also the major source of their history during the decade immediately preceding their ultimate suppression in 1818. Yet this does not mean that authentic source material in other languages, which is in fact vitally important for the early history of the Pindaris, ought to be ignored, as has hitherto been done by scholars dealing with the subject.

The book mainly deals with the history of the Pindaris from about 1806 to 1818, the rest being merely the prologue and the epilogue to this study. The preliminary account

providing the requisite background for the history of the Pindaris is the weakest part of the book.

The Marathi dictionaries do not give either the root or the possible origins of the term "Pindari", while our present knowledge of their early history is still inadequate and quite unauthentic. The correct etymology of this word, therefore, remains to be finally determined. Ignoring the clarifications by Irvine (N. Manucci, Storia Do Mogor, ii, 459 fn.) and S. N. Sen (The Military System of the Marathas, p. 74 fn. and Glossary), Dr Roy has taken Bidaris, Berads or Bedars and Lungare Beldars too as the Pindaris. Similarly on the basis of the antiquated and inaccurate translation of Bhimsen's Nuskha-i-Dilkash by Scott (History of the Deccan, ii, 79, 115-22) and other later works in English based entirely on this publication, Dr Roy has described Ponappa (correct reading "Pidia") as a Pindari leader, while he was really a Berad (Sarkar, Aurangzeb, v. chapter LVI).

The ancestry as well as other details of the early Pindari leaders given by Dr Roy are all based on the family traditions or other accounts then known or current among these leaders and recorded by the British writers during or soon after the suppression of the Pindaris. They are full of unauthenticated assertions and unacceptable exaggerations like the grant of zari by Malhar Rao Holkar (zari-patka signified the golden pennon conferred by the Peshwa upon generals invested with authority).

It is distressing to find that the account of the entry of the Marathas in Malwa is based on and sought to be authenticated by antiquated works like Indore State Gazetteer, 1908, or Imperial Gazetteer of India: Central India, 1908. Moreover, many statements on pages 7-10, 96-8 and 119-21 clearly reveal Dr Roy's ignorance or lack of proper understanding of the history of the Marathas, Malwa and Rajputana during the 18th century. In this context it may be pointed out that like other writers dealing with the history of this period Dr Roy too has failed to take due note of the decisive adverse effect of the withdrawal of a majority of the European military commanders from the armies of Sindhia and Holkar in 1803 on their efficacy, which proved to be a major, indirect yet definite cause of the rise of the Pindaris in the years that followed. Finally, it is rather odd that the author should include Amir Khan of Tonk in his list of Pindari leaders merely because of Amir Khan's close association with the Pindaris and his having employed them occasionally, especially when Dr Roy himself admits on page 77 that "he cannot be regarded as a Pindari chief". The details about him and his activities are, therefore, only indirectly relevant to the main theme.

Dr Roy's account of the various Pindari leaders since the beginning of the 19th century on the other hand is authentic, being based on all available contemporary records and corroborated by various reliable sources in English. Yet while his brief sketch of their organization and methods is well-documented and quite illustrative of their life and beliefs, military equipment and methods of fighting, it does not give any details about the different categories of the Pindari forces and therefore fails to bring out their essential features in the context of the different terms used for each of them. His narrative of the Pindaris in central India and of their excursions elsewhere summarizes the details of their activities in or against the British-held territories, as given in the records or other contemporary works of the officers of the East India Company in the English language. But it leaves many important blanks in the overall picture that has been presented. This is particularly true

in relation to the central Malwa region and the adjoining territories of central and south-western Rajputana, which were most adversely affected by the activities of the Pindari raiders. In this connection a detailed study of the contemporary Persian or Rajasthani source material preserved at the Alienation Office, Poona, and other repositories of Persian manuscripts or at the Rajasthan State Archives should have been undertaken. In order to skilfully weave "his story of the Pindaris into a general background of British and Maratha policy" and further to "convincingly demonstrate" the causes of the growth of the Pindaris, placing the responsibility squarely on the policies pursued deliberately by the British after 1805 and the Marathas from the late 18th century, the author has been compelled to use a much larger canvas than was otherwise necessary.

Dr Roy's account of British military preparations and the operations against the Pindaris is not only full of important authentic details duly corroborated by references to contemporary primary sources in the footnotes, but not being weighed down with quotations is quite readable too. Moreover, while the mass of available evidence on the subject is very large, the details have in no way obscured the essential outlines of the main theme. The author has dealt with the third Anglo-Maratha war at some length to clearly bring out how it was the direct outcome of the operations against the Pindaris. Further, he argues how the British, taking full advantage of the Pindari menace and the general antipathy against the Maratha powers in Malwa and Rajputana, successfully manoeuvred to establish their own domination in these two regions.

The British policy towards the Pindaris after their surrender and the steps taken by the British for the resettlement of not only the Pindari chiefs and their junior commanders of various categories but also of ordinary Pindari horsemen have been duly recounted by Dr Roy. It is particularly noteworthy that the British made adequate arrangements for the proper follow-up of the original resettlement plans in order to solve the various routine difficulties that had to be faced by the Pindaris in normal day-to-day life as ordinary agriculturists at least during the early decades following their resettlement on land. The author has also briefly described the Pindaris who evaded arrest and in that context mentioned Jai Singh, Ajit Singh and Dhonkal Singh. However, he has not cared to correctly ascertain their true identity. In the process he has mistakenly identified Dhonkal Singh as the pretender to the Jodhpur throne (p. 307), while in fact he was a Khichi Chauhan of the Bijawat sept, who ultimately became the Raja of the alienated state of Garha carved out of the Raghogarh state.

In the concluding chapter Dr Roy has summarized the results of the Pindari war and mentioned its effects on central India, Maratha politics, the Rajput states (of Rajputana only) and the British. It is unfortunate that like most researchers and historians of this period, particularly in the context of central India, Dr Roy too has failed to take note of the most vital and lasting outcome of the British operations against the Pindaris as well as of the third Anglo-Maratha war, viz., Malcolm's settlement of Malwa through British mediation on behalf of the smaller Rajput states, the granting of specific guarantees to the petty chiefs and even small estate-holders and payments to them even by big Maratha states like Gwalior and Indore. Thus the British froze all the political boundaries and gave permanency to the rights existing at the time of the establishment of their supremacy

and domination there, which continued undisturbed for more than a century till about the achievement of independence in August 1947.

On the whole this is a good thesis based on a careful study of a wide range of source material and patient research over many years. Its value is enhanced owing to the very meagre literature on the Pindaris. The quality of this neatly printed and excellently got-up book is, however, married by quite a few misprints in the main text and the footnotes.

SITAMAU (MALWA)

RAGHUBIR SINH

PADMAJA SHARMA, Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur and His Times (1803-1843 A. D.) (Educational Publishers, Agra, 1972).

Pp. xvi+304. Rs 30.00.

The book under review is the outcome of the recent emphasis on the exploration of the regional history of some parts of India and based on an extensive study of documents in the National Archives of India and the State Archives of Rajasthan. It was submitted as a thesis for the Ph.D. degree of the University of Rajasthan. It is a well-documented biographical study of Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur, in the introduction to which the author has also given a brief survey of the political condition of Rajasthan in the latter half of the 18th century.

Of the nine chapters in the book the first deals with the early years of Man Singh's life, his difficulties and ultimate succession to the throne of Marwar. In the second chapter the author has depicted the interests of Udaipur, Jaipur and Jodhpur in the Krishna Kumari episode. She has given a graphic description of the inter-state conflict over the issue of the marriage of Krishna Kumari with Jagat Singh of Jaipur. Circumstances were so created that the beautiful but unfortunate Mewar princess, far from being married to the ruler of Jaipur, was forced to swallow a heavy dose of opium which ended her life. It looks rather strange that the proud Maharana of Mewar, with a glorious tradition of chivalry and heroism, agreed to put his 18-year-old daughter to death under the threat of the Pindari leader, Amir Khan. Dr Sharma should have examined this issue a little more critically. Chapter III puts in perspective the domination of Amir Khan over the politics of the state of Marwar. Amir Khan was the head of a most unscrupulous band of armed men whose services could be purchased by the highest bidder for even the most heinous object. It was, therefore, not difficult for the sardars and courtiers of the Jodhpur darbar to hire his men for getting rid of Singhvi Indra Raj and Ayas Devnath whose ascendancy in the court had aroused their jealousy. This profoundly affected the politics of the state which now came completely under the sway of this unscrupulous Pindari chief.

In chapter IV the author has described Man Singh's relations with the British. The state of Jodhpur had a strategic importance of its own. Moreover, trade routes linking the western sea-coast with the rest of the country passed through Marwar. The British wanted to bring Man Singh under their influence which the latter resisted. Ultimately Marwar was invaded by the British army on 17 August 1839 and Man Singh surrendered without a

fight. The author should have clearly discussed here the factors which constrained Man Singh to adopt a hostile attitude to the British. She has briefly referred to these in the concluding chapter, but they merited more elaborate discussion. Chapter V deals with the predominance of the Naths in the state of Marwar during the period of the rule of Man Singh. Their interference in the administration of the state and atrocities transgressed all limits and this goaded the British to move against them. The author has ably defended Man Singh's dependence on the Naths for his own security.

Chapters VI and VII refer to the different aspects of the contemporary administrative structure of Marwar. In chapter VI Dr Sharma has discussed the position of the ruler, the nobility and the mutsaddis. Though the description is lucid and interesting, it is an elaboration of materials already known to us. But her treatment of the finances of Marwar in chapter VII is absolutely original. She has taken great pains to describe the different sources of state revenue and the chapter is replete with references to original sources which confirm the veracity of the author's conclusion. In chapter VIII the author has depicted the society and culture of Marwar in the 19th century. Her approach to the subject is critical and intelligent but topics under review have a much wider scope. In the concluding chapter she has assessed the character and personality of Man Singh and examined his role as a ruler and statesman. One is, however, left with the impression that the author has been unduly sympathetic to the "hero" of the book. I fully agree with what the late Dr A.L. Srivastava wrote in the foreword:

She has not only been critical but also highly sympathetic to Man Singh who could not be said to have been a successful ruler or an administrator, far less a statesman of high calibre. Man Singh possessed an impressive appearance, but not a remarkable personality.

However, the merit of the book is that it gives a lucid, readable and exhaustive account of the political, administrative, economic and cultural history of Marwar in the first half of the 19th century. Dr Sharma has been indefatigable in her search for all accessible sources—Rajasthani, Persian and European—some of which are still in manuscript. The value of the book is heightened by the glossary appended at its end in which technical Rajasthani terms have been clearly explained. The bibliography is complete, but the author should have given an appraisal of the various original sources, especially the Rajasthani klyats, and added a few maps to illustrate the Maharaja's campaigns. There are a few printing mistakes which should have been covered in the list of errata. The absence of an index is unfortunate.

Magadh University Bodh-Gaya R. N. PRASAD

M. S. RANAWAT, Bharatpur Maharaja Jawahar Singh Jat [in Hindi] (Hindi Sahitya Mandir, Jodhpur, 1973). Pp. ii+105. Rs 10.00.

A monograph on Maharaja Jawahar Singh Jat of Bharatpur by Mr Ranawat is a most welcome and illuminating addition to works on the history of Jats.

K.R. Qanungo's History of the Jats is a pioneering, systematic and documented study on the subject, tracing their origin, rise and fall. But like all pioneering works, it suffers from the absence of an exhaustive study of all relevant documents. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has made a good use of additional materials bearing on the Jats while weaving the texture of their 18th century history vis-à-vis the central power of the Mughals in his memorable work, The Fall of the Mughal Empire. But the very compass of his book has forbidden him to give a detailed treatment of the Jats. Hence a study of the history of the Jats, with a detailed and critical account of their most powerful ruler, Jawahar Singh Jat, by Mr Ranawat has filled a long-felt void.

The author, by virtue of being the latest in the field, has made full use of all the material available in Persian, French, Marathi, English and Rajasthani languages. By his positive findings he has untied the knots on the most controversial issues, some of which are: did Surajmal nominate Nahar Singh as his successor; when did Samru, the German military adventurer, enter into the service of Jawahar Singh Jat and was there a short break in his tenure of service to this Jat ruler; and how and under what situation did the death of Jawahar Singh Jat come about? Some problems have, however, escaped his notice. Thus he has not shed adequate light on why the peace-loving Jats took up the cudgels for a fight with their imperial masters. Was it the result of their religious motivation aroused as a logical sequel to Aurangzeb's diehard Islamic fanaticism? Or was there a factor other than religious for their defiance: in other words, did the Jats, like other defying elements in the decaying empire, draw upon the chaotic state of affairs for their inspiration, incentive and encouragement to make a bid for carving out a principality for themselves?

The language of the book is simple and easy to understand by an average reader.

KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA

S. B. P. NIGAM

J. KUMAR, Indo-Chinese Trade 1793-1833 (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1974). Pp. x+217. Rs 20.00.

The export of Indian opium and cotton constituted an important link in the triangular trade between Britain, India and China in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Tea, silk and other items procured by the British in China were paid for primarily in Indian opium and cotton. Until 1833, when the East India Company ceased to be a trading body, a part of the Indian exports to China was on the account of the Company, which financed it mainly through the revenues earned within the country. There was, therefore, no problem in using the proceeds from these exports for the China investment. But the bulk of the exports, even during this period, was through the European agency houses and private European and Indian traders engaged in the China trade. In order that the export earnings made by these agencies were available for investment in China goods for Europe, these agencies were obliged to deposit most of the earnings at the Canton treasury against which they were issued bills on Calcutta or London. This arrangement was perfectly acceptable to these

agencies and private European traders in so far as it afforded them a convenient channel of remitting their wealth to England.

The book under review is a welcome addition to the literature dealing with this fascinating theme. After giving background information up to 1792 in the first chapter Dr Kumar discusses at great length in chapter II the Macartney mission of 1792-3 to the Celestial empire. Chapters III and IV deal with the commodity trade during 1793-1833. These chapters include a discussion of the procedure of the procurement of opium in Bengal—by far the single most important item in the India-China trade—the chief sources of supply of the major items in this trade and a description of the fluctuations in the volume of trade in these items. Chapter V traces the impact of the China trade carried on by the Portuguese and the Americans on the fortunes of the English and Indian traders engaged in this trade. The serious problem posed by the clandestine import into China of Malwa opium is discussed in great detail. The impact of the China trade on the economy of India is analysed in the closing chapter.

At the level of bringing forth new facts on the basis mainly of original sources, the book has a lot to commend itself. Though there is inevitably a degree of duplication with Michael Greenberg's standard work on The British Trade and the Opening of China, 1800-42, published in 1951, Dr Kumar's work covers substantial new ground mainly in the direction of describing the trends in the volume of India-China trade. A significant contribution of Dr Kumar's study is his analysis of the impact of the China trade on the Indian economy. The role played by this trade in facilitating the drain of wealth from India is rightly emphasized. In the process the China trade also gave a fillip to the banking activities of the European agency houses based in Calcutta and Bombay. The growing export of Indian cotton and opium to China accentuated—though not started, as Dr Kumar seems to suggest—the process of commercialization in Indian agriculture, for Bengal opium at any rate had already been an important item of export to South-East Asia through the agency of the European trading companies in the 17th century. Of course, the element of compulsion inherent in the extension of the cultivation of opium (Dr Kumar notes that peasants unable to supply the stipulated amount of opium were subject to a penalty of Rs 150 per maund) coupled with the peculiar manner in which the procurement of this drug from the producer was organized giving him an unduly low price considerably limited the positive implications of this development.

A major limitation of the book is that it contains a curious mixture of a large amount of tedious detail in several places that serves only to cloud the principal issue under discussion and a surprising lack of detail at other places where more information was clearly called for. As an example of the former, chapter II dealing with the Macartney mission and based almost entirely on well-known secondary sources could have been substantially compressed. As an instance of the lack of detail, one could take up a statement Dr Kumar makes on page 41:

However, the export of cotton to China from the Bengal Presidency rose to an unprecedented height in 1811 amounting to over 21,000 bales and private tonnage had to be arranged for its conveyance. In 1812-13, the market for Indian cotton to China was

not favourable, and so only 10,817 bales of Bengal cotton...could be sold in the China market.

Given that the fluctuation in the intake of the Chinese market between one year and the next was as dramatic as this, it would have helped if Dr Kumar had indicated briefly the reasons behind this phenomenon. It is perfectly possible that evidence was not available on this point but even bringing that fact to the notice of the reader would have been helpful.

Again, while there is a profusion of facts throughout the book, the quality of analytical rigour is exemplified by statements such as this: "When, however, the price of raw cotton increased, its effect was felt by the manufacturers of cotton fabrics" (p. 44).

Notwithstanding the limitations pointed out above, there is no doubt that Dr Kumar's work is an important effort in the area of the study of India-China trade in the early part of the 19th century. The book is reasonably priced, but the large number of printing errors is rather irritating.

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PETER HARNETTY, Imperialism and Free Trade: Lancashire and India in the mid-Nineteenth Century (University of British Columbia, 1972). Pp. ix+137. £3.00.

Professor Harnetty's argument consists of two main theses. The first concerns the British attitude to the empire in the middle of the 19th century: he argues that despite the predominance of the free trade and laissez-faire ideology British attitude towards the empire was not one of indifference. The second concerns "the ways in which British dominion over India in the middle decades of the nineteenth century was exercised in the interests of the Lancashire Cotton industry" (p. 6). After an introductory chapter, where the main issues are identified, Professor Harnetty discusses the impact of Lancashire pressure on the Indian government's tariff policy (chapter II). In the subsequent chapters he points out the contrast between the free trade premises implicit in the policy prescriptions in that sphere and the Indian government's actively interventionist policy in the promotion of private enterprise in the development of India as a source of raw cotton (chapter III), and the deployment of public investments in economic overheads (chapter IV) and of government resources and legislative machinery (chapters V-VI) to increase the quantity and to improve the quality of cotton supplied by India to Lancashire. The author concludes:

Taken together all these policies show Lancashire's awareness of the great importance of India to British trade in the mid-nineteenth century. In pursuit of its interests, the principles of laissez faire proved no handicap to the Manchester School (p. 126).

One wonders why the author should have thought that such propositions—the first deducible from the most rudimentary statistics of Indo-British trade and the second fairly familiar to students of recent writings on the subject—merited the amount of research effort which is commendably evident in this thoroughly documented study. Perhaps the

answer is that the work is intended not so much as a contribution to Indian economic history as an addition to the ever growing literature on British imperial ideology.

The theme of "imperialism of free trade" has been a matter of lively debate since Gallagher and Robinson in a celebrated essay (Economic History Review, 1953) challenged the established view that the mid-19th century attitude to empire was one of indifference, if not active hostility. India was, they pointed out, a case in point. The orthodox view in academic writings (e.g., C.C. Bodelsen's Studies in mid-Victorian Imperialism or W. L. Langer's Diplomacy of Imperialism) was that the free trade doctrines of the Manchester School interfered with the proper appreciation of the advantage of possessing an empire as a possible area for procuring raw materials and market for manufactures. Among those who joined the controversy D.C.M. Platt (Economic History Review, 1968) sticks to the older view and looks upon India as an exceptional case. In this debate along with Platt, O. Mac Donagh (Ibid. 1961-2), W. M. Mathew (Ibid. 1968) and Peter Harnetty (Ibid. 1965) contributed significantly.

The classical view of nineteenth century British imperialism claims interest in empire to be at a low ebb in the middle decades of the century and at full tide after 1880. According to this view, the free trade ideology of the Manchester School was responsible for the mid-century indifference. Explanations for subsequent rise of 'new imperialism' vary . . . . But all agree in contending that late-Victorian imperialism represented a sharp change from the indifference of the mid-century, and that this change was due to the decline of free trade beliefs (p. 123).

In order to refute this view, unchallenged till 1953, Harnetty shows how "the evidence of British policy in India in the mid-nineteenth century cast doubt on the classical view". He argues on the basis of his Indian data that British business interests in fact promoted a "mercantilist" view [which] expressed itself in policy demands which show the imperialism inherent in "free trade attitudes" (p. 6). The core of this "mercantilist" view according to Harnetty is the belief "that dependencies exist for the benefit of the metropolitan State" (p. 35). It is this view which provides a continuity in British imperial policy. Heckscher made this point long ago. Historians who have missed this point have over-emphasized a break in the 1880s and underplayed the internal contradictions and ambivalences in the free trade ideology.

As regards what happened in India at the receiving end of the imperialistic policies in mid-19th century, Harnetty has little that is new to say. He has gone through and used much of the relevant literature, though the omission of some authors is curious and the private papers of Sir Charles Trevelyan, who naturally figures prominently in this work, have not been used (these are available in Newcastle as well as the Bodleian and are, in the opinion of the present reviewer, of great importance because of his occasional dissidence from prevailing bureaucratic predispositions). But he adds very little to what we know about cotton interests and railway development (Daniel Thorner and McPherson), public works (R. J. Moore), agricultural development programme (Leacock and Mandelbaum), tariff policy (R. C. Dutt, Moore and E. C. Moulton) Manchester lobbying (Arthur Silver and Arthur Redford) and the laissez-faire myth (J. B. Brebner and others). Let us consider this work, therefore, as an interpretative essay.

Such an evaluation leads one to the fundamental weakness of this work and many of its kind. Perhaps their basic conception of imperialism is in some ways inadequate. Harnetty states:

For the purposes of this analysis, 'economic imperialism' is seen as simply one aspect of the wider phenomenon termed 'imperialism'. It reflects an attitude of mind to the possession and use of dependent territories by the metropolitan power (p. 5).

Is the rejection of the classical theories of economic imperialism implicit in positing economic imperialism (we take the liberty of taking the term out of the quarantine of quotation marks) as a subset, as an aspect of a wider phenomenon? Hobson and Lenin are mentioned and questioned in another context. It is not clear whether their views on the centrality of economic factors in the dynamics of imperialism are acceptable to Harnetty. It seems that in rejecting their views he is in agreement with D.K. Fieldhouse; he also agrees with D.S. Landes that there was economic exploitation under imperialist domination. Thus he leaves the reader to infer that he holds a pluralistic position—that there were many causes and kinds of imperialism in the 19th century of which economic imperialism was one kind. In the next sentence of the same passage economic imperialism is said to be the "reflection" of an "attitude of mind". This is too rarefied a notion: does that refer to economic imperialism as an ideology? But the sentence immediately preceding seems to refer to imperialism as an empirical phenomenon, not just a set of ideas. Harnetty goes on to say:

Imperialism clearly involves subordination; the indicative phenomena of economic imperialism are those episodes in which the arts of political manipulation gave aid to the craft of enterprise and in which the dominion employed by the superior power is associated with wilful and effective subordination (pp. 5-6).

Here the weakness of this concept of imperialism shows up in his approach. The methodology is "episodic" instead of being a structural analysis of imperialism. Thus in successive chapters Harnetty deals with illustrative episodes. This is characteristic of a good deal of historical writing. And it is perfectly legitimate for a historian to confine himself to events illustrative of political manipulation, or whatever. However, Harnetty aims at something more. He writes in the preface:

In writing this book, I have drawn upon a number of my published articles in which I have developed the theme of 'the imperialism of free trade' as a conceptual tool in analysing British policy in India in the middle of the nineteenth century (p. ix).

The expectations raised by this promise are not fulfilled. So far as the history of British attitude is concerned, Harnetty has presented a well-argued case. One cannot say that with equal enthusiasm if one considers the work as an analysis of economic imperialism.

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S. BHATTACHARYA

The Indian Historical Review

HUGH TINKER, A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920 (Oxford University Press). Pp. xvi+448. £5.75.

In the preface to this very full and thorough study the author, who is both an expert on Indian history and ex-director of the Institute of Race Relations in London, makes some unusually frank admissions. He reminds us of the conscious selection which the historian must make (in this case he estimates it at five to 10 per cent of the material seen) and the power he has to distort. He goes further than this by pointing out that it is not enough for a historian to take the "median stance between the extremes" in his evidence, because the evidence may itself be more profuse on one side than on the other. All he can do is to put his cards on the table and state his viewpoint. Professor Tinker does both these things. He shows the breadth of his research and his integrity as a historian by producing a very large amount of interesting first-hand material, and he makes it clear that his viewpoint is that of the 20th century liberal. It is crucial to bear this in mind or one might be perplexed by the disparity between even his selection of evidence and the conclusions drawn.

These conclusions are, broadly, that the system of indentured labour by which millions of Indians went to the colonies in the West Indies, Mauritius, Malaya and elsewhere was a thinly disguised substitute for the slavery of Africans which the humanitarian interest in England in the early 19th century had done so much to abolish. Professor Tinker adds to the drama of the book by implying a picture of gradual triumph of good over the apparently overwhelming forces of evil. The latter are personified by the planters in the colonies whose vast wealth had suffered from the cutting off of the flow of cheap labour from Africa. They were determined to outwit, through their control over the colonial governments, the small band of brave Christians who had damaged them by their influence over public opinion in England. They had no intention of treating their Indian indentured labourers any differently from their former negro slaves and only pretended to agree to the restrictions on their power which the Indian government, despite the handicap of its principles of laissez-faire, continually tried to impose on them, but which the colonial governments found hard to enforce. Because of the fickleness of public opinion, which put economics and national glory before humanitarianism, they succeeded throughout the second half of the 19th century and had cheap and docile labour for their tea, coffee, sugar and rubber plantations. Then came Gandhi, Andrews, Polak and others who revealed to the public, both English and Indian, the full horrors of the plantation system. The government had to give in and abolish the whole thing in the wake of the first World War.

But Professor Tinker shows us that his impression is very different from that gained by the professionals throughout the period. In particular, the ICS men most closely involved with Indian emigration were always pointing out the merits of the system for the Indian himself. Even if one accepts that many of the first migrants left their homes because of false promises or in dire necessity, the author himself admits and estimates that, by the time there were settled communities, three quarters of the emigrants either stayed on instead of availing themselves of their free passage home or sent for their families and friends. He tells us that enlightened officials such as Hume, Campbell, Gordon, Frere and Grierson backed the system and some would have encouraged it more strongly but for the danger of

arousing the peasants' irrational suspicions of government pressure. Others saw emigration as a welcome escape for particular groups such as those suffering from systems of slavery like pariahdom in the south and kamiuti and sawak in the north, people rendered unemployed after the building of the railways, young widows and for anyone who did not fit into the closely conventional Indian rural society. In a speech in 1890 the reformer Ranade said:

If the old thraldom of prejudice and easy self-satisfaction and patient resignation is ever to be loosened... a change of home surroundings is a standing necessity and a preparatory discipline.

Conditions for emigrants, states Professor Tinker, were certainly no worse than those for starving and evicted Irish and Scottish crofters who emigrated to America and Australia or for the army ranks. The McNeill-Chaman Lal Report in 1914 supported the system as much as other government reports, though recommending a few improvements. "The great majority of emigrants", it stated, "exchange grinding poverty...for a condition varying from simple but secure comfort to solid prosperity".

Despite this evidence, Professor Tinker regards as "a delusion" the idea that "out of the inhumanity of indentured emigration there might emerge, by dint of reform, a genuinely humane system". This seems to be falling into the historical traps of both using hindsight and ignoring the context of the times. However, he compares the revised scheme of 1917 favourably with similar schemes for settling British ex-servicemen on land in the dominions. "But", he adds, "under the shadow of indenture and slavery it aroused no enthusiasm in India and obtained little support in Britain". Surely, if it is true that the system was no longer retrievable it is because of the political situation in India and not of its inherent "inhumanity". Indian politicians such as Gokhale, Sastri and Gandhi opposed the system for the first time, seeing clearly that they could revive the British conscience and pride over the abolition of slavery and inflict the first major defeat on the Indian government. Gokhale said in the Council in 1910: "I think I am stating the plain truth when I say that no single question of our time has evoked more bitter feelings throughout India". Reports of disenfranchisement in Natal and prostitution in Fiji, in particular, had roused educated Indian opinion to reverse the complaints about the middle class emigrants being excluded from the self-governing colonies and demand an end to all migration. Characteristically, the growth of democracy and self-government did make the situation of racial minorities necessarily worse and even the championing by Curzon and Hardinge of the emigrants' cause was futile.

Professor Tinker limits his study to the indenture system, which causes him to take too little notice of one of the main reasons for the ending of it—the fact that it was no longer needed. Indians, including Panjabis and Gujaratis as well as those from the previous main recruiting grounds of the Gangetic plain and Madras state, had overcome their superstition about crossing "the Black Water" and were now emigrating freely on their own initiative to Asia, America and Africa. The author is following up this work with another on the period 1920-50 which should redress the balance. It is to be hoped that it will also explain the reversal of attitudes to the whole issue of migration. It is interesting to contrast the present battle of the liberals against restrictions on immigration (often referred

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to as "slave labour") with this story so ably told of the struggle against the encouragement of it from 1830 to 1920.

New Delhi

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AMALES TRIPATHI, Vidyasagar: The Traditional Moderniser (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1974). Pp. x+112. Rs 8.00.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was an exception in an era which produced some exceptional Indians. He belonged to a generation called upon to meet the challenge of the modern age. The sharp contrast between the progressive industrial society of England and the stagnant feudal society of India attracted the attention of the Indian intelligentsia and compelled them to reinterpret their own past and make a conscious search for the new. Western penetration produced its first reaction in Bengal because it was here that British rule began. The Bengalee response to this challenge coming from a vibrant, dynamic civilization was broadly threefold. The Derozians were swept off their feet by "the enchanting vision of the West". The Young Bengal equated Westernization with English language and attitudes, English food and drink, English habits and customs. To them the past was anathema. The Conservatives like Radhakanta Deb were prepared to accept British rule, English education and the new professions, but were not willing to tolerate any attempts to modernize Hindu religion or the prevailing social values. Rammohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar held an intermediate position. They re-examined the indigenous tradition and used it not to shape the present in the image of the past, but to discover historical guidelines appropriate to the needs of the time.

This monograph written to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar deals not only with the ideas and achievements of this great scholarreformer, but also provides a penetrating analysis of the intellectual-cultural milieu of 19th century Bengal, popularly called the Bengal Renaissance. Professor Tripathi disapproves of the attempt to read the history of 19th century Bengalee culture in the light of Burchardt's Civilization of Renaissance in Italy which he feels "confounds rather than clarifies" issues. The term "Renaissance", it is true, refers to a particular period in the history of Italy and to a specific cultural pattern and in this sense may be misleading. If, however, Renaissance is regarded as a socio-cultural process describing a transitional phase between the breakdown of traditional society and the rise of national consciousness, it may have some analytical uses. Professor Tripathi would rather apply Thomas S. Kuhn's notions of "paradigm" and "paradigm shift", since they embody "the sense that human activities are defined and controlled by tradition". Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions no doubt puts forth a theory of scientific development based on the experience of physical sciences, which presents very useful and interesting possibilities of application to history. Nevertheless such models have obvious limitations because of the basic differences between the social and physical sciences. Besides, to emphasize the importance of tradition in change is not new. David Kopf's use of the concept of "revitalization" ("The Brahmo Sama)

Intelligentsia and the Bengal Renaissance: A Study of Revitalization and Modernization in Nineteenth Century Bengal", Transition in South Asia, ed, R.I. Crane) lays stress on the past, as do sociologists like Milton Singer (Great Tradition in a Metropolitan Center: Madras, 1959) and Clifford Geertz (The Religion of Java, 1960), who understand modernization not as a galloping process of Westernization, but as an indigenous transformation.

Professor Tripathi rightly asserts that modernity and tradition are not totally divorced and that Vidyasagar "perceived creative possibilities within the Indian context". He gives as an example the use Vidyasagar made of his profound Sanskrit learning. Unlike the Orientalists, he was not interested in reviving the glories of Vedic or Gupta India, but in channelizing a traditional language to serve a modern role. He studied Sanskrit in order to enrich Bengali and spread useful Western knowledge through the vernacular.

In a similar way Vidyasagar used tradition for social reform. Both Rammohan and Vidyasagar justified social change on the strength of passages from Shastras and tried to show how reform was in consonance with the sacred texts. This was to make reforms acceptable to credulous Hindu masses, who could not have been convinced by arguments based on reason or utility alone. The impulse for reform came as a result of contact with the modern way of life; the appeal to ancient texts was to facilitate reform. Vidyasagar took immense pains to find the shloka from the Parashara Samhita which permitted widow re-marriage. The author says that Vidyasagar followed in the footsteps of Rammohan in arguing that in a conflict of traditions the earlier had to be accepted as more authentic. According to R. S. Sharma, however, the Parashara Samhita was compiled in about the eight century A.D. and was not that ancient, nor did it command much prestige before the Gupta period ("Ancient Values and Modern Reforms in the 19th Century Society", Ideas in History, ed, Bisheshwar Prasad, pp. 86-92).

Vidyasagar was a man of many parts. A social reformer par excellence, he considered widow re-marriage his "greatest good work". An eminent educationist, he did pioneering work in the field of popular education and women's education. Professor Tripathi discusses these aspects as well as Vidyasagar's contribution to Bengali literature. But above all what impresses the reader is Vidyasagar the man—his absolute sincerity, simplicity and moral and intellectual integrity. He got sick fairly early of pundits, who sold their souls for a mess of pottage. He got sick of the anglicized intelligentsia, who swore by Western norms but lacked the Western courage of conviction.

Professor Tripathi's scholarship is impressively displayed by the numerous allusions to European literature and philosophy. There are unfortunately far too many printing errors in these hundred pages. The author makes no claims to any important discovery or new research. There is perhaps not much scope for that after outstanding studies in this line such as those of Brajendranath Banerji, Jogeshchandra Bagal, Benoy Ghosh, "Indramitra", R. C. Majumdar and others. However, Professor Tripathi does make an important point. It is fashionable these days to criticize our 19th century social reformers as élitists, men who sought to change society from above without touching the core of the problem which was economic exploitation by an imperialist power. These critics argue that what was necessary was a social and economic revolution which the reformers were incapable of thinking of, let alone initiating. The author raises the question whether mid-19th century

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India possessed the objective conditions for a successful revolution which even France and Germany lacked in 1848. The rivalries between different religious, linguistic and caste groups would have been exploited by the British who in any case could have put down an uprising because of their overwhelming superiority in arms, organization and money.

British rule introduced certain elements of modernity and Vidyasagar saw nothing wrong in using government's legislative power to remove abuses in Hindu society. In his small way he tried to free women from their age-old bondage and spread education among the weaker sections of society. He was not interested in clichés, but in deeds. His achievements may not have been stupendous, but at least he did something in a country where talk is often a substitute for action.

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SURAJIT SINHA (ed), Aspects of Indian Culture and Society, Essays in felicitation of Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose (The Indian Anthropological Society, Calcutta, 1972). Pp. viii+248. Rs 30.00.

The late Professor N. K. Bose was a person of many-sided brilliance. An anthropologist, a social historian and a student of Orissa architecture, he was no armchair intellectual. He participated in famine relief, freedom movement and the Gandhian reconstruction programme; he accompanied the Mahatma on his tours of former East Pakistan, kept a superb diary of those historic days and emerged as one of the most authoritative spokesmen of Gandhian philosophy. He was probably not a professional in the strict sense of the term; his interests ranged over a wide spectrum and he imbibed many influences. He was not frightfully original, but the combination of an anthropologist's discipline and a social worker's feel for the grass roots gave his writings a measure of precision and freshness. He adopted the functionalist's approach to the micro-study of social structure and enriched the anthropologist's perspective by exploring the possibilities of a historical approach to many aspects of Indian anthropology. His style was free from jargon and he invariably stimulated. It is only appropriate that the students and admirers of Professor Bose should plan and bring out a competent and readable fetschrift volume in his honour. Despite some gaps and the absence of papers on tribal transformation and the caste system, the choice of subjects is imaginative and most of these are close to Professor Bose's areas of interest.

Surajit Sinha contributes an excellent descriptive account (pp. 1-22) of Professor Bose's intellectual development and his many contributions. What would delight a historian was Bose's rejection of the "ahistoricism of the functionalists" (p. 3); he took a "consistent position that the proper domain of cultural anthropology is a functional study of the process of culture change" (Ibid). He added to the historian's perspective by applying the methodology of field study to Orissa architecture, by underlining the material base of Indian culture through a study of the material traits throughout the country and by highlighting the economic base of caste and the economic element in the Hindu mode of tribal absorp-

tion. The vision of anthropologists was also enlarged. Bose's Bengali book, *Hindu Samajer Gathan* (Calcutta, 1949), involved a combination of many perspectives, a study of texts and archival records and the field study of village, caste, kinship, pilgrim centres, etc. But Sinha's article is a pupil's tribute with little attempt at a critical analysis of Bose's contributions. Bose excelled in parts but did not give a composite anthropology of Indian society. Maybe he did not want to. Moreover, what was Hindu about the so-called Hindu mode of tribal absorption? Was it not another way of evolution of the tribal mode of production into the agrarian?

F. G. Bailey seeks to construct a framework for the study of politics in village India (pp. 23-9) and in doing so he is conscious of the diversities and limitations of such model-framing. Gopal Sarana deals with emerging dimensions of the anthropology of complex societies (pp. 31-9). Few would agree with him that the "Indian social-cultural anthropologists have adopted a...historical approach in a country with one of the longest continuous historical traditions" (p. 34), but few will disagree that "anthropology of Indian civilization should consist of—at least a major part of it should—a real contribution to culture history (pp. 34-5). The following statement is unexceptionable:

There is much historical material available waiting to be analyzed by anthropologists, using anthropological ideas and concepts, either alone or in collaboration with interested historians. I do not mean by culture history the type of social history of the sociologists like Max Weber. It will be culture history which according to Verne F. Ray is "an integrated picture of the cultural events as they occur diachronically, i.e. through time—constructed from materials selected from the known cultural data" (p. 35).

B. K. Roy Burman explores the sociology of national integration (pp. 41-56); one wishes there were more facts to substantiate and explicate his conceptual formulations. Benoy Ghose deals with somewhat familiar aspects of social change in 19th century rural Bengal, the rise of the rural and urban élite (pp. 57-63); there is little that is new and provocative in it.

Surajit Sinha and Andre Beteille look at urban anthropology; the former attempts a plausible frame of urban study (pp. 65-78) to which Bose's Calcutta study contributes in no small measure; the latter makes out a case for an in-depth study of selected categories, namely, clerks and skilled manual workers (pp. 79-86). The mythical and ritualistic relationship between temporal rulers and local deities is known; in fact rajas derived their power and sought to base the legitimacy of their rule on their special relationship with the presiding deities of their kingdoms. Nityananda Patnaik describes (pp. 87-114) how decline in secular power of the Puri raja affected his relationship with Lord Jagannatha and attenuated his ritual role. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya contributes a well-written paper (pp. 133-51) on indigenous iron and steel industry whose technology, he rightly points out, belonged to a particular social and ritual system and could not be modernized. But all iron smelters were not outcastes or "kept enclaved" outside the Hindu society; in the tribal society of Chotanagpur both Lohars and Asurs were integrated in the emerging agrarian system. Baidyanath Saraswati identifies three modes of transmission of knowledge, the oral-observational, the textual and the transcendental (pp. 153-69), and appropriately underlines their autonomy and interaction.

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Buddhadeva Bhattacharyya describes Gandhi's humanism (pp. 115-32); it has not much in common with Bose's ideas on the Mahatma. David G. Mandelbaum finds his article on curing and religion in South Asia (pp. 171-86) a little out of place in the present volume, but retains it because both he and Bose were interested in the uses that people make of their religion. Hitesranjan Sanyal tries to correlate the revival of religious architecture in Bengal in the 15th-17th centuries to an emerging regional identity (pp. 187-203) to which the Bengal Sultans contributed considerably. Hirendra K. Rakshit's informative piece on language, culture and race in south India (pp. 205-32) analyses the interesting pattern of differential contributions by various ethnic and migratory components. Asok K. Ghosh undertakes an admiring rather than a critical review of Bose's pioneering work on the Mayurbhanj palaeolithic industry (pp. 233-48).

The volume, imaginatively compiled, contains many useful perspectives in the study of Indian society and culture to the development of a few of which the late Profeesor Bose had himself contributed.

PATNA K. SURESH SINGH

N. MANSERGH (ed), The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. IV (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1973). Pp. xcix+1295. Rs 260.00. PENDEREL MOON (ed), Wavell the Viceroy's Journal (Oxford University Press, 1973). Pp. xvi+528. £8.00.

It is common for many individuals who are greatly esteemed by their contemporaries to lose much in reputation after they pass into history. But the swing of the pendulum is also sometimes the other way, and figures of whom their fellowmen thought little loom larger as they become remote. Wavell is one of those fortunate men. Churchill had no regard for him, describing him once as no better than a chairman of a country golf club; he lost battle after battle in Europe, Africa and Asia; and he was totally inarticulate in counsel. Shelved as Viceroy, he carried on for three and a half years till he was dismissed by Attlee. Now attempts are being made to refurbish his image. Nothing, of course, can turn military defeat into victory, but explanations are being found for his run of disaster—lack of armaments and men, the superiority in planning and equipment of the enemy, the mistakes of the civil governments. Even more effective have been the efforts to restore some glitter to his viceroyalty, to hint that his silences were pregnant with wisdom and to suggest that it is unfair to permit his years to be overshadowed by the more spectacular Mountbatten.

In fact, as the documents and papers now being published are beginning to reveal, Wavell's contemporaries were right. He was a mediocre, humdrum personality with all the prejudices of an average British soldier of those days, and his performance in India was not merely colourless; he did as much as any individual in high places could to destroy the unity of India. His role in support of Linlithgow, Amery and Churchill to wreck the Cripps Mission was disclosed by the first volume of the British documents on the transfer of power. Volume IV of the documents shows that neither the makers of British policy in

London nor their chief agents in Delhi thought, even as late as 1944, in terms of permanent withdrawal from India; and Wavell was sent out not to make any advance on the political front but as a "safe" man who would regard war as the first priority. The War Cabinet was not prepared to consider even the appointment of an Indian as finance member. The only constructive suggestions that Amery, the Secretary of State, had to make was improving the Indian breed by getting the princes to marry Nordic women and the establishment of poetry societies. If Gandhi was released in May 1944, it was because Wavell had assured his masters that Gandhi's health made his further participation in active politics improbable; and to Churchill this was one more of the misjudgements expected of Wavell, and a serious cause of complaint.

Once the war was over, politics had perforce to be brought out from under the carpet; and though Wavell had not been sent out to deal with this, he served British interests well. His private journal now clearly establishes his crucial role in strengthening the Muslim League till it was in a position to demand the partition of the country. At the conference of Indian leaders which met at Simla in the summer of 1945, Wavell acted as a total partisan of the League. At a time when the League could not control the ministries in any of the provinces where the Muslims were in a majority, Wavell not only conceded parity between "caste Hindus" and the Muslims and between the Congress and the League but, going back on his word to Mahatma Gandhi, agreed not to select a Muslim belonging to the Congress. This was virtual refusal to regard the Congress as a non-Hindu, secular organization and acceptance of Jinnah's contention that the Congress was as much a communal party as the League. But Jinnah was not prepared to accept even a Muslim who belonged to the Punjab Unionist Party. On this issue Wavell could have rebuffed the League and brought it to manageable proportions. Jinnah was aware of this. "I am", he told Wavell, "at the end of my tether; I ask you not to wreck the League". But Wavell, instead of taking hold of this occasion, promptly abandoned his own proposals and dissolved the conference, thus enabling Jinnah to obtain the fullest advantage of his obduracy.

This was but the first of Wavell's many disservices to India. Throughout the negotiations of the Cabinet Mission in 1946, the Viceroy joined A.V. Alexander to prevent Cripps and Pethick-Lawrence from reaching any satisfactory settlement with the Congress. Wavell never undestood Gandhi, disliked and distrusted him and filled his diary with comments of petty venom. Nehru even he could not help liking; but he could never rise to Nehru's level of thought and comprehension. So, when the Mission conceded to the Congress that groupings were optional, the Viceroy made no secret of his unhappiness. "I sympathise with the Muslims rather than with Congress and I am not convinced that our document is quite fair to them". Wavell need not have worried; there were enough internal contradictions in the Cabinet Mission Plan to prevent the long-term constitutional process from working. But the Viceroy saw to it that the Interim Government was a disaster. He first laid emphasis on the British Parliament's ultimate responsibility as well as on the Governor-General's prerogatives. Then, when he could not prevent the Congress from assuming office, he saw to it that the League recovered from its tactical setback and joined the Interim Government as early as possible. So eager was Wavell to destroy the control by the Congress

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of immediate authority that he brought the League in without any commitment on its part to the Cabinet Mission Plan.

Once the League had joined the government, Wavell ignored his specific assurance to Patel that he would prevent any attempt to make the administration a battleground of communal politics. Instead, he encouraged the League to take up an obstructive attitude and himself sought to act as umpire. By the time Wavell was recalled in March 1947, he had much cause for satisfaction. Governance was at a standstill, communal killing was spreading across northern India, and the leaders of the Congress had concluded that there was no alternative to partition.

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S. GOPAL

## S. R. MEHROTRA, The Emergence of the Indian National Congress (Vikas Publications, Delhi, 1971). Pp. viii+461. Rs 60.00.

The title of Professor S.R. Mehrotra's The Emergence of the Indian National Congress is misleading in a rather pleasant way. What the author has given us is not yet another microstudy of the immediate antecedents of the Bombay Congress, concentrating on what Dufferin did or did not tell Hume in May 1885 (though there is a good account of all that too in the last chapter), but a detailed survey, based obviously on painstaking research, of Indian political associations and their activities from the 1830s down to the mid-1880s. The work is more comprehensive, thanks to the use of materials available only in the UK, than its only serious rival in the field, Bimanbihari Majumdar's two volumes on political ideas and associations. The sophistication and theoretical flourishes of Anil Seal are certainly absent, but the factual underpinning seems much more secure.

Beginning with an account of the Landholders' and the British India Society of Calcutta, Professor Mehrotra's book goes on to study in detail the foundation of the three Presidency Associations on the eve of the 1853 Charter renewal, and this is followed by an interesting survey of intelligentsia reactions to 1857 as revealed by contemporary newspapers. The three succeeding chapters deal with the 1858-80 period; here a somewhat pedestrian catalogue of general factors contributing to nationalism serves as a curtain-raiser to a good survey of association activities and an excellent analysis of the specific issues (finance, education, services, press, etc.) over which the proto-nationalist intelligentsia came into ever-sharpening conflict with their rulers. Then comes the "rising tide" under Ripon and finally the events of 1885.

The amount of research which lies behind Professor Mehrotra's volume is truly impressive. The bibliography lists no less than 72 newspapers and 48 periodicals, plus a mass of private papers (mostly of British officials, but also of Mehta, Naoroji and Chiplonkar), association proceedings and reports and contemporary pamphlets. The bio-data given in the footnotes add considerably to the value of the book, and future research students will have good reason to thank Professor Mehrotra for the unusually detailed information

he has provided about newspaper sources: the precise issues of the Bengal Harkaru, for instance, where the Landholders' and the British India Society Proceedings are to be sought for (pp. 11, 13, 30), or the convenient summary of British Indian Association activities given in three 1895 issues of the Hindoo Patriot (p. 147). Newspapers in fact constitute Professor Mehrotra's principal source and he has quoted copiously from them throughout his book. The extracts are well-arranged, however, and hence seldom dull and quite often exciting. As stray examples one might cite two early calls for passive resistance, provoked by the Lex Loci Act, in the Englishman of 9 August and 16 August 1850 (p. 48), a Friend of India analysis of strikes on 9 February 1854 as "the orthodox method of expressing discontent throughout India" (p. 237) and an unusually sympathetic evaluation of the mutineers by the Hindoo Patriot of 21 May 1857: "their countrymen view them as martyrs to a holy cause and a great national cause" (p. 101). Students of comparative history might be interested also in the following comment made by the Friend of India of 22 January 1857:

The only patriotism we have yet encountered [in Asia] is in Canton. The rabble of that city seem to have a genuine heartfelt contempt for the barbarians, which in Spartans we should admire (pp. 107-8).

Considered purely as a collection of source-materials, then, Professor Mehrotra's book deserves unqualified praise. The trouble begins when we approach it, as we must, as a serious contribution to the history of Indian nationalism. Professor Mehrotra has frankly stated in his preface that he has written "conventional political history" (p. v); this evidently begs the question as to whether political history can ever be a self-explanatory whole. Not surprisingly the section on general factors (chapter III) is the weakest part of the book. The cultural and literary dimensions of emergent nationalism have been entirely ignored, except for a brief discussion of "revivalism" (pp. 127-32). The Hindu Mela has not even been mentioned and Bankimchandra gets into the book only by virtue of a speech referring to him made at a meeting of the British Indian Association (p. 142). The almost total neglect of vernacular sources (the Somprakash, for instance, is used only as quoted by the Hindoo Patriot, though the bibliography does include a reference to Benoy Ghosh's volumes of newspaper extracts), partly inevitable though this might be in a book with an all-India coverage, has been evidently a serious limitation here. No serious attempt has been made to explore the possible socio-economic roots of nationalism, the author remaining more or less content with the hoary educated middle class formula.

What cannot but worry and disappoint the reader throughout Professor Mehrotra's book is the gap between exciting data and conventional or even pedestrian conclusions. In the first chapter, for instance, so far as Professor Mehrotra's own comments are concerned, we are presented with the familiar story of Indophile Britishers benevolently leading the first generation of English-educated Indians into the path of modern politics: the non-official white "interlopers", he tells us, "by their precept and example taught their Indian fellow-subjects the art of constitutional agitation" (p. 4). Yet a much more complex and contradictory picture is indicated by some of the data cited in the same chapter. George Thompson, for instance, emerges as a restraining quite as much as a stimulating force, whose warning in 1843 that "for the work of agitation and petitioning, as carried on in England, you are not yet prepared" (p. 30) contrasts sharply with the much more militant

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tone of Sharadaprasad Ghosh's address in October 1841 to the Deshahitaishini Sabha (pp. 27-8). Professor Mehrotra tells us that the London British India Society "held out the hope of a long, active and beneficient career" (p. 17); the resolutions passed at the inaugural meeting of the Society in July 1839, as cited on the very same page, provide food for second thoughts. Resolution No. 3, for instance, described India as a country "whose inhabitants are docile, intelligent, and industrious...capable of supplying many of our demands for tropical produce, and the desire and capacity of whose population to receive the manufactures, and thus stimulate the commerce of Great Britain, would, under a just and enlightened rule, be incalculably developed". Another example of the unimaginative handling of excellent source-materials is provided by Professor Mehrotra's analysis of the tensions between the zamindar-dominated British Indian Association and the Indian Association with its professional middle class orientation. The fascinating hints given in J. M. Tagore's letter to S. C. Bailey concerning the social and regional origins of Indian Association stalwarts which Professor Mehrotra has discovered among the Ripon Papers (p. 363) are not followed up and the pro-peasant activities of the latter body are practically ignored.

In recent years, as is well-known, Indian nationalism has attracted a lot of sophisticated attention. Few among these historians have shown so far the patience and industry of Professor Mehrotra, who evidently has at his command a mass of data highly relevant for the testing of the hypotheses being put forward by such scholars as well as for replacing them if necessary by alternative models. The pity of it all is that Professor Mehrotra seems incapable of using the riches he has accumulated.

University of Delhi Delhi SUMIT SARKAR

GIRIJA K. MOOKERJEE, History of Indian National Congress (1832-1947) (Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1974). Pp. xx+276. Rs 40.00.

This is the revised and enlarged edition of Mr Mookerjee's book published in the 1930s with C. F. Andrews as the co-author. In the present edition the author has added four chapters, covering the story of the national movement and struggle for freedom in India from 1920 to the eve of independence. He has taken 1832 as his starting point, though the Congress was not founded before 1885, because he rightly believes that a movement like the nationalist movement has a multiple origin, socio-religious ideas having a role as important as the politico-economic forces. The author has tried to present the socio-political history of India of about 150 years centring round the Indian National Congress. He has, however, not neglected to refer to "finance capital in England" (preface, p. viii) and the economic factors necessarily associated with capitalism in tracing the growth of nationalism. Unlike Marxist writers who emphasize the economic forces, Mookerjee has laid more stress on "the strength of medieval religious ideas in India, which...has considerably influenced

India's basically atavistic society towards mobility and change" (Ibid). He finds Marxist perspective "one-sided and incomplete", but then discounting the weight of economic forces and leaning for the most part on religio-philosophical ideas would equally distort the picture. A movement like nationalism and struggle for freedom from foreign yoke cannot be something monolithic, for all factors, religious, philosophical, social, political and economic, have their part to play in its rise and subsequent make-up. Indian nationalism is a polylithic structure and neglect of anyone of these factors will only distort our vision.

In his first chapter Mookerjee has discussed the rise of religious movements like the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ram Krishna Mission, Aligarh movement and other religious reform movements, while in the second chapter he has traced the origins of the liberal tradition. Rammohan Roy rightly dominates the early years of the 19th century with his immense contribution to the rise of new ideas and spirit of revolt in every sphere of national life. Dayanand's idea of swaraj and Vivekananda's revolutionary concepts had an electric effect on national psychology. The events of 1857 also left a deep impression on the sentiments of both Indians and Englishmen and the increasingly vindictive and reactionary attitude of the bureaucracy in the second half of the 19th century made the Indian people bitterly aware of the evil of alien domination. In spite of the moderate tone of earlier political associations and the Indian National Congress in its years of infancy, there was a marked tilt towards extremism and radicalism among the youth, particularly the educated, in India. This may explain the sudden outburst of extremism, even terrorism, at the beginning of this century. Economic exploitation, glaringly apparent in the closing years of the last century, wholesale poverty, hunger and decimation heightened the feeling of revolt and gave birth to the demand for independence-complete break with Great Britain-which consistently grew in volume and strength from decade to decade. But till 1905 what Mookerjee calls "short-sightedness" characterized the thinking of prominent Congress leaders. Surendranath Banerjea was content in 1895 with "representative institutions of modified character for the educated community, who by reason of their culture and enlightenment, their assimilation of English ideas, and their familiarity with English methods of government, might be presumed to be qualified for such a boon" (p. 87). In his thinking there was no room for the masses. Dadabhai Naoroji introduced the economic factor through his analysis of the drain theory and had the courage to use the word swaraj in his presidential address in order to identify the aspirations of the people.

Events moved with a catalytic force thereafter and paved the way for the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, who steered the course of the freedom movement for the next quarter of a century. Mookerjee has narrated the story of these years and mainly reiterated the known facts by reference to Congress resolutions and presidential addresses. The Lucknow Pact and the re-entry of extremists along with Annie Besant provided a form of unity which lent strength to the Congress movement. But its achievements were very modest and if the trend had continued independence would have been a dream of the distant future. But post-first World War events together with the insane step of enacting the Rowlatt Act overnight metamorphosed the supine Congress and galvanized it into leading a forceful struggle

against the British government. Mahatma Gandhi introduced a novel weapon in political warfare, which was given a moral twist. The first part of the book ends with the non-cooperation resolution of 1920 which radically altered the nature and character of the Indian National Congress.

In the second part Mookerjee has traced the growth of the freedom struggle. Here his assessment of Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to the rise of a new spirit of mass revolt is realistic. British victory in the first World War had "inordinately" increased the power of the ruling class in England and strengthened its resolve to stick to the principle of economic imperialism and maintain a firm hold on the vast empire. The Indian problem in such a situation seemed to be insoluble in the near future. But the emergence of the consciousness "of its deeper self", the new awakening of the Indian middle class faced with the inexorable pressure of foreign capitalism and the failure of the constitutional method of conflict as well as the revolutionary one hastened the advent of the struggle for transfer of power from alien hands. At the Nagpur Congress in 1920, Mookerjee maintains:

...it was felt that national unity had been obtained and it seemed that this feeling not only gave rise to new courage but also determination....In some mysterious way the soul of the Indian people was stirred and they seem to have been ripe for this most dangerous decision (p. 216) [that of non-cooperation].

He rightly observes that "now the decision to fight for freedom came from people themselves" (Ibid). This factor altered the basic character of the movement and it was Mahatma Gandhi who brought about the change by rousing the consciousness of the people and harnessing them to fight their battle for swaraj. There is ample substance in the author's statement that "the movement of 1920, without this (Gandhi's) remarkable statesmanlike leadership, could not have reached the dimension which it did afterwards, the dimension which affected the life and the world of thought of the Indian people, in an indelible manner" (p. 219). On the whole, however, the story of the events from 1920 to 1946 has been narrated briefly without any distinct contribution to either the knowledge of facts or their interpretation.

This book is an eminently readable account of the passage of India from alien domination to freedom from it.

Allahabad Bisheshwar Prasad

A. C. NIEMEIJER, The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919-1924 (The Hague, 1972). Pp. vii+263. Price not stated.

The Khilafat movement in India is a difficult subject to deal with. Its difficulty consists in the main in the endless controversy about and widely divergent interpretations of British policy towards the Indian Muslims particularly during the non-cooperation movement, with which the Khilafat movement (1919-24) has become completely merged. By its very nature this is an emotive theme of our nationalist struggle, in treating which an unwary historian is liable to fall a victim to his personal prejudices and predilections. It is a bane

of much recent historical writing on the subject that it has been coloured by some such subjective considerations of the historians concerned.

A.C. Niemeijer, notwithstanding his awareness of the slippery ground he has to tread on, is no exception to this. There is plenty of evidence that he is not easily frightened by the apparent complexity of the Indian political situation; he tries to understand and analyse it critically in the context of the Khilafat and non-cooperation movement. His enquiry into the Indian situation, however, remains incomplete, for he overlooks the rich tradition of anti-British resistance built by the Indian Muslims since the 1880s through their pan-Islamic activities primarily designed to end foreign political domination in the country. Likewise his understanding of the nature of the Indian nationalist movement suffers from his unwillingness or inability to give up his ambivalent attitude towards British rule. He seems to start with a premise-which he buttresses by providing a theoretical framework of nationalism—that Muslims in India constituted a separate and distinct group by themselves. This seems to preclude a dispassionate and objective analysis of the composite nationalism that was emerging as a force in Indian politics. The so-called British noninterference in religious matters Niemeijer appears to take too literally, and the working of British policy with regard to the communal question in India he fails to examine in proper historical perspective. His theorizing on nationalism is not so innocuous as he would like us to believe; he is so ready to place Muslim separatism beyond the purview of British policy under the cloak of his "brand" of nationalism that his whole discussion becomes suspect in the eyes of a detached observer. What made for diversity between the two communities, Hindu and Muslim, figures much larger in his account of the Khilafat movement than the "ties of common sorrows and sufferings", the realization of which brought them closer to each other and paved the way for united political struggle. His analysis of the groups and classes that counted in this movement is interesting as far as it goes, but unfortunately it does not go far enough to lead to a more sophisticated understanding of their political involvement in it.

Niemeijer's hedging about is characteristically reflected in his attempt to give something of everything which seems to prevent deeper insights into the driving forces of the movement and its inner contradictions. The fear of the propertied classes of militant mass action, which compelled them to prefer communalism to nationalism (p. 175) needs to have been analysed at some length, for this would have shed a good deal of light on how far the movement was actuated by genuine communal considerations. At the same time it would have deepened our understanding of its relationship with the non-cooperation movement with obvious political overtones. Niemeijer does not appear to be fully aware that class interests cut across communal divisions and make for communal harmony, on the plea of ensuring which the British sought to justify their presence in India. The role of the British in creating and fostering communal tension and division in the interest of their rule has not been properly assessed by the author. It is amusing that the search for "a wholly adequate frame of reference for interpreting British policy" should take Niemeijer from the sordid game of divide and rule to the discovery of democratic elements in the so-called reforms of 1909 which sought to create a permanent barrier between the two communities by providing for communal electorates. The statement that "the new nationalism in Asia and Africa was charged with dangerous possibilities for all minorities" (pp. 164-5) not only ignores the immediate anti-semitic context nearer home, but also betrays a sinister design to malign a political force slowly undermining colonial overlordship.

The merger of the Khilafat with the non-cooperation movement provided a remarkable example of unity achieved by the Hindus and Muslims. This unity coupled with increasing mass participation imparted to the movement a measure of intensity and militancy hardly ever witnessed after 1857. Such was the result of this unity and militant mass struggle that Gandhi confidently predicted the attainment of swaraj within a year, This caused extreme anxiety to the British, for it was not only a disconcerting reminder of the failure of their persistent efforts to destroy this unity but also posed a serious challenge to the raj. But fortunately for them Gandhi suddenly and quite unexpectedly called a halt at this critical juncture following some incidents at Chauri Chaura and the whole movement collapsed in no time. Once the cementing force of militant mass struggle (whose infinite capacity to submerge divisive forces is undeniable) was gone, British efforts to drive a wedge between the two communities began to bear fruits. Niemeijer is extremely hesitant to accept all this. His limitations are numerous, some of which he admits in the preface. What he does not admit is his readiness to exculpate the British from much of the responsibility for accentuating communal cleavage in India. And precisely for this reason his work falls short of a definitive study of the subject.

University of Delhi Delhi

R. L. SHUKLA

## P. HARDY, The Muslims of British India (Cambridge University Press, 1972). Pp. x+306. £1.90.

Since W. W. Hunter wrote his famous book, The Indian Mussalmans: Are They Bound in Conscience to Revolt against the Queen? (London, 1871), many others have come out with their views on the Indian Muslims. To name only a few, Wilfred Cantwell Smith's Modern Islam in India (Lahore, 1943; London, 1946), Ram Gopal's Indian Muslims: Political History, 1858-1947 (Bombay, 1959), K.K. Aziz's Britain and Muslim India (London, 1963), Aziz Ahmad's Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964 (London, 1967), Khalid bin Sayeed's Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1857-1948, 2nd edn (London, 1968), Mushir U. Haque's Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947 (Meerut, 1970) and Aziz Ahmad and G. E. Von Grunebaum, ed, Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968 (Wiesbaden, 1970) are important contributions. Of them all Hardy's work is the latest and most balanced discussion of the history of the Muslims of British India.

Hardy begins his work with a quotation from Lord Dufferin in November 1888, describing the Muslims of British India "as a nation of 50 million, with their monotheism, their iconoclastic fanaticism, their animal sacrifices, their social equality and their remembrance of the days when, enthroned at Delhi, they reigned supreme from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin" (p. 1). It was, he very significantly adds, an image of British India's

Muslims which they themselves came to have in the later 19th and 20th centuries; in the pre-British era this image would have startled them. "Scattered unevenly over a sub-continent the size of western Europe, divided by sectarian beliefs, dietary habits and often by language, most under Muslim but some, as in the empire of Vijayanagar or in the coastal towns of the south, under non-Muslim rule, medieval Muslims did not think or act as a nation" (Ibid). They shared the common lives of non-Muslim cultivators under the Mughal, Afghan and Turkish rule.

Hardy proceeds to show how the Muslim population developed by stages a separate consciousness that ultimately led to the partition of India. He surveys briefly the medieval legacy and shows that a common culture had developed in India. He then traces the effects of British rule on Muslims in India before 1857 and refutes Hunter's contention that they were in all respects a ruined race under the British rule. British rule, he maintains, might have ruined the office-holding Muslim aristocracy of lower Bengal and the Muslim weavers of Dacca, but for other Muslims it brought security, as in Panjab; for some who were engaged in shipping it brought wealth, as in Bombay; for yet others in British service it brought land, as in the North-Western Provinces, the centre of Muslim culture. Generally speaking, the British only changed the form and style of success in Indian society from the military to the commercial and after the decline of the Mughal empire the Muslims could prosper as capitalists like others.

Contrary to the usually accepted view, Hardy argues that Muslims were able to take political initiative because in the region of the North-Western Provinces (modern Uttar Pradesh) British rule before 1857 and even the events of the mutiny and the rebellion of 1857-8 had not been economically disastrous for most of them. He shows from a detailed study of the Settlement records after the mutiny that the Muslims were in fact the gainers. They were well-represented in the subordinate services. Thus on 1 July 1859 the number of deputy collectors in the North-Western Provinces was 13 Hindus to nine Muslims, with six Hindus and three Muslims as temporary deputy collectors. By 1 October 1859 Muslims were predominant with 13 as against 11 permanent Hindu deputy collectors. In 1864 Muslims still held half the deputy collectorates; 43 Muslims as against 34 Hindus were sadr amins and 93 Muslims as against 83 Hindus were tehsildars. Thirty-five per cent of the appointments carrying a salary of Rs 150 per mensem made in 1871 were given to Muslims; the percentage in Panjab was 38. Magisterial powers were also conferred on prominent landowners to create a solid native vested interest in British rule and the Muslims shared in this patronage.

However, the Muslims were suffering from certain psychological setbacks and after 1870 the British government tried to chalk out and implement a new policy towards them with the result that slowly they came to terms with British India. Syed Ahmad Khan interpreted Islam as a religion of progress; other bridge-builders also worked in India for a rapproachement between Islam and the 19th-century Western dominated world and British rule was accepted as lawful. The British government in India encouraged community consciousness and Muslims began adopting public and political postures. Religion played a vital part in the growth of Muslim political separatism.

Gradually the Muslims of Bengal found sufficient common ground with those of the upper provinces, personal and regional rivalries notwithstanding, to form an All-India Muslim League and then to demand a separate electorate for the expanded provincial councils which Minto and Morley proposed to introduce in all the major provinces of British India. The granting of the demand endowed a minority of Muslims with a vested all-India political interest and a legal personality "which other classes of Muslims might round out or take over" (p. 148).

Thus the Muslims became the protected poeple of British India—a welcome counterweight to the Congress in British eyes. Professor Hardy is not sure whether separatist politics bred separate electorates or separate electorates bred separatist politics, but separate electorates at provincial levels did enable leading Muslims to behave as the plenipotentiaries of a separate political community when they wished to do so.

The separatist tendency led to the Simla deputation under the Agha Khan. Hardy accepts that Minto acknowledged and decisively encouraged the nisus towards a separate Muslim political personality in India. Maulana Muhammad Ali described the Simla deputation as "a command performance". Before 1947 most Indian nationalists would have supported this thesis, but Hardy says that "in both independent India and independent Pakistan the answer is now commonly 'no'—in India in order to blame Muslims and in Pakistan in order to praise them" (p. 156). It is difficult to agree with Professor Hardy on this point. The feeling in India continues to be that it was "a command performance". Not only did the British acknowledge and encourage; they also did definitely incite and take advantage of the situation. There are ample archival materials to prove that the Simla deputation was "a calling up of puppets to counterbalance Congress". The deputationists knew that they would receive a sympathetic hearing from the British government in India and even Hardy concedes that if it was not a command performance it was at least "guaranteed box-office success in advance" (Ibid.).

Religion progressively entered Indian politics (1910-24). The ulama played a vital role in fanning popular religious feeling. Pan-Islamism also made its headway in India and during the first World war the Khilafat movement made an appeal to the Muslim masses. The Western educated Muslims and the traditionalists drew nearer, but with the end of the Khilafat movement separatism once again raised its head. The author has rightly called the years 1924-35 as the period of frustration. Communal antagonism grew under dyarchy and the middle classes drifted apart. The search for security in strong Muslim provinces within a weak Indian federation gained ground and, finding no remedy, the Muslims subscribed to a political ideology which ultimately led to the enunciation and materialization of the idea of Pakistan.

Professor Hardy has tried to be objective, but he has not been able to discard the traditional approach of the British historians. He admits that there was nothing like a Muslim nation in medieval India. The class interests of the Hindu and Muslim agricultural classes or of the Muslim weavers were the same all over India. Again, the interests of the Muslim and Hindu aristocrats vis-à-vis the Hindu and Muslim peasantry were identical. The developments in the different regions of India were uneven. In Bengal the Hindu landed aristocracy and Muslim peasantry and working classes were preponderant. In the

North-Western Provinces on the other hand the Muslim aristocracy was ascendant whereas the Hindu peasantry, in most cases, suffered. Taking India as a whole, it was a highly complex phenomenon. Pan-Islam was there and Hindu revivalism was also there; but if the third party, here tertius gaudens, had not been there to sharpen the differences and to minimize the essential unity of the toiling masses, the history of the Indian sub-continent would have been entirely different. It is too much to say that the British created the evil hearts, but certainly they did untie the evil hands. Professor Hardy has not thrown sufficient light on this disintegrating role of British imperialism in the history of India.

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S. R. SINGH

ISHWARI PRASAD and S. K. SUBEDAR, *Hindu-Muslim Problems* (Chugh Publications, Allahabad). Pp. iv +218. Rs 35.00.

The study of freedom struggle, cultural movements and Hindu-Muslim problems in India under the British rule has attracted the attention of a number of scholars. Besides the research works produced by modern scholars, memoirs and reminiscences of those who participated in India's struggle for freedom also add to our information. But only a few writers have taken a detached view of the problems and analysed the available data scientifically. The book under review is the latest publication on the subject, dealing with Hindu-Muslim reaction to the Indian political situation in pre-partition days.

The book has been divided into 12 chapters, for the most part dealing with Muslim political thought and activity. The first and the last chapters are titled "The Rise of Muslim Separatism" and "Pakistan and Its Partition" respectively. The intervening chapters are related to the Aligarh movement, Jinnah, the birth of the idea of Pakistan, the Round Table conferences, the second World War, the Cabinet Mission, etc. In every chapter an effort has been made to highlight Muslim separatism, but the role played by Hindu communal leaders, which also widened the gulf between the Hindu and Muslim communities, has not been adequately discussed. In fact the book suffers both from the suppression as well as distortion of facts. The approach is unscientific and biased.

First, the authors discuss how Islam came to India in the train of the Muslim invaders and then turn to the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, the revolt of 1857 and the adoption of "divide and rule" policy by the British rulers in India. There is no reference to the establishment of the Mughal empire and the cultural integration that took place under the Mughals. The opening sentence in chapter I, "Islam entered India at the head of an army, its soldiers had the koran in one hand and the sword in the other", is misleading. The fact that Islam came to India as a religion and its first representatives were Arab merchants who carried on their overseas trade with the coastal states of south India peacefully should not be lost sight of. There were Muslim settlements in the coastal towns of Kerala, Maharashtra and Gujarat long before the Muslim armies overran these regions during the 13th-14th centuries. Islam as a political force came much later. The sections

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dealing with the establishment of British supremacy and the revolt of 1857 contain important gaps and are very sketchy.

The second chapter entitled "The Aligarh Movement" is not based on a careful study of the source material. The sources of information have not been cited in the footnotes and, therefore, it is difficult to compare the long passages quoted in the text with the original. The authors paint Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as the first Indian Muslim leader who separated the Muslim community from the mainstream of national life. They mention his visit to England in 1869 where he was deeply impressed by Western culture and learning, but they do not discuss his efforts to effect a rapproachement between the British government and Indian Muslims. The hostile attitude of the British rulers towards Muslims after 1857 did not change all of a sudden. It took Sir Syed several years to convince the British that all Muslims were not disloyal to their raj. His works, Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind (The Causes of the Indian Revolt) and the Loyal Mohammadans were written for this purpose. The authors fail to take into consideration the socio-economic conditions of the Muslims and do not analyse the circumstances that forced Sir Syed to establish the M. A. O. College and start the Aligarh movement for the modernization of Muslims. Their statement: "The Movement was designed to disintegrate the growing solidarity of Hindus and Muslims" (p. 10) is not substantiated by facts.

Again, there is no mention of the foundation of the Scientific Society at Ghazipur in 1863 (shifted to Aligarh in 1864) by Sir Syed and his friends—Hindus, Muslims and the British administration—for the dissemination of European scientific ideas and inventions through Urdu translations of English works. Unlike Swami Dayanand Saraswati and his followers who had founded the anti-cow slaughter society and displayed hostility to Urdu culture, Sir Syed never uttered a single word which might widen the gulf between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Analysing Sir Syed's political views, Professor Tara Chand states:

Saiyid Ahmad Khan was a believer in Hindu-Muslim political cooperation. It is a travesty of truth to regard him as the author of the theory that the Hindus and the Muslims were two separate nations. In fact, he was a supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. For him there was no religious barrier in the way of unity, no objection on the grounds of conscience. His differences with the Congress were based on considerations of political expediency alone. Such differences existed among the Hindus also, e.g., the land-holding class and the educated middle-class (History of the Freedom Movement in India, ii, 358-9).

Furthermore, the Hindu revivalists have received praise from the authors, though most of them preached hatred against Islam and Christianity. Thus Swami Shraddhanand, the leader of the Shuddhi movement, has been wrongly portrayed as the champion of Hindu-Muslim unity when the authors say: "Tall and stately, he had moved throughout the country preaching the doctrine of Hindu-Muslim unity and advancing the work of the Shuddhi movement" (p. 89). In fact the Shuddhi movement was launched to convert Indian Muslims to Hinduism and its leaders attacked Islam in a harsh language with a view to winning converts. This movement increased hatred between Hindus and Muslims more than any other movement. Moreover, there is no justification for discussing the rise

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of the Muslim League, the pan-Islamic trends among the Indian Muslims, the Khilafat and non-cooperation movements, the Indian National Congress, the Shuddhi and Sangathan, and Tanzim and Tabligh in the chapter dealing with the Aligarh movement. None of these movements was the offshoot of the Aligarh movement. In this long chapter the chronological order has not been maintained; nor have changes that took place in the political situation in India from time to time been taken into consideration.

With the beginning of the 20th century a Muslim bourgeoisie appeared in India and its members began aspiring for a share in the government. By this time the Muslims had been rehabilitated in the government's confidence and were raised to important positions in administration. It was also at this time that new Muslim leaders like Agha Khan, Jinnah and several others came to the forefront while Aligarh was forced to say good-bye to politics and exist as an educational and cultural centre.

The subsequent chapters are disjointed and repetitious. The problems discussed in the second chapter are repeated in these chapters. The third chapter on Qaide Azam Jinnah not only presents a jaundiced account of the founder of Pakistan, but also contains glaring gaps. According to the authors Jinnah changed from a nationalist into a communal leader in order to emerge as a great leader. They maintain:

He had no political principles save his egoistic desire to be a great leader. That desire was the main spring of his public career, which explains the changes of his political convictions and his transformation from a nationalist into a rank communalist (p. 92). This is a superficial remark.

In fact Jinnah entered politics in 1906 as a follower of Dadabhai Naoroji and Gokhale and continued to work for Hindu-Muslim unity till 1930. But the failure of the Congress leaders in solving communal problems and his differences with Gandhiji over political strategy and tactics led him to retire from politics. In 1931 he settled in London and did not take any interest in Indian politics. In 1934 Liaqut Ali Khan paid him a visit and persuaded him to return to India and lead the Muslim League. He accepted the offer on condition that all members of the Muslim League follow him as their supreme leader. The authors have not utilized the documents available in the National Archives or even modern writings on Jinnah and Indian politics for the preparation of this chapter.

In short, every chapter presents a distorted picture of Muslims and highlights Muslim communalism. There are repetitions and digressions. The sources of information have not been referred to in certain chapters. In chapters IV-VIII a few books have been mentioned in the footnotes, but no reference number has been used either here or in the quotations in the text. Printing errors in which the book abounds add to its poor quality. Even a bibliography and an index have not been added. The book does not attain the standard of a research work. The absence of modern research techniques makes one suspect that the name of Professor Ishwari Prasad has been printed as a co-author only to enhance the value of the book.

ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY ALIGARH

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M. P. SREEKUMARAN NAIR, Reappraisals: Studies on Indian National Movement (Kerala Historical Society, 1972). Pp. 91. Rs 12.50.

The author appears in this small book as an apologist for the moderates and constitutionalists in the Indian struggle for independence, who, having faith in the British liberal and democratic traditions and their sense of fair play, saved the movement from straying into wayward channels by assiduously adhering to the constitutional path. Of the eight chapters in the book, which purports to be the fruit of the author's researches over the last 15 years, two have already appeared in journals: these are chapter V on "Tilak: Revolutionary or Constitutionalist" (Kesari-Mahratta, Poona, 1 August 1970) and chapter VII on "Congress Policy and Constitutionalism" (JIH, xlviii, pt. iii, December 1970). Apparently the author has not adopted any criterion for picking up either aspects of the national movement or personalities associated with it with the result that while Rammohan Roy, Gokhale, Tilak and Gandhi are the main objects of focus, leading constitutionalists like Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das have received only cursory attention. The tone is set in the very first chapter, "Contradictions in British Imperial Policy in India", when the author endorses A.P. Thornton's view that "no imperialism is wholly good or wholly bad". Little wonder that he proceeds to describe the British government as one of "trusteeship" (p. 2) and British rulers, conservatives as well as liberals, as wedded to a policy of "state socialism" (p. 4) and "benevolent despotism", committed to rule India on the principle of "everything for the people and nothing through the people" (p. 3).

After paying such tributes to the British the author naturally goes on to praise one by one those Indian leaders who displayed profound faith in the British system and constitutional methods. Chapters II and III deal with Rammohan Roy and Gokhale, ardent supporters of constitutionalism and progress through existing political machinery. Tilak comes next and the author thinks that Mandalay had a chastening influence on Tilak who saw the light of reason and followed the constitutional path thereafter (chapters III-IV). The next three chapters concentrate on the Gandhian phase. It is admitted that the intensity of Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and mass action eroded the strength of constitutionalists. Yet the author maintains that leaders like Rajagopalachari, Azad and others who sponsored the July 7 Resolution, which aimed at provisional government at the centre, provided a strong dose of constitutionalism. Their influence is seen in the peaceful transfer of power which is viewed as a mere constitutional measure. Constitutionalism thus appears to have played a sensible and effective role in the freedom struggle and the charge of "political mendicancy" against it is sought to be refuted.

In his eagerness to prove the effectiveness of constitutional methods the author describes the civil disobedience movement as a march into "wilderness" (p. 49). On the other hand he regards the constitutionalists wedded to peaceful agitation as "revolutionaries" and even holds their programme of "non-payment of taxes" (p. 57) as consistent with their methods. The bias could hardly be more pronounced. What strikes the reader is not so much the emphasis on the contributions of Indian constitutionalist leaders but the waywardness of mass action and even non-violent agitation against rulers who are portrayed as being quite reasonable and just. The author uses such jargons as "state"

socialism", "feudal paternalism", "benevolent despotism" and "political materialism", the meaning of the last term being not at all clear, to sanctify British rule in the country. There are quite a few printing errors as well.

University of Ranchi Ranchi

A. P. SHARMA

SANGAT SINGH, Freedom Movement in Delhi (1858-1919) (Associated Publishing House, New Delhi, 1972). Pp. xii+342. Rs 40.00.

Dr Sangat Singh's work may be justly described as a pioneering one. There is no study in English of Delhi since the revolt of 1857 other than C.F. Andrews' biography of Maulvi Zakaullah (published in 1929) and the unpublished doctoral thesis of Donald Ferrell on politicization in Delhi between 1909 and 1921. Dr Singh's book spans a long period. The choice of the date 1858 suggests that he considers the "freedom movement" (a piece of Indian English which has now become respectable) to have begun in Delhi as a consequence of the harsh treatment of its inhabitants by the British after the revolt. He ends his study in 1919—a year which saw widespread hartal in Delhi, as in many other Indian towns, to protest against the Rowlatt Acts.

Based on the copious material available in the National Archives of India, the Delhi Chief Commissioner's Office and the Patiala Record Office, this book traces the history of political events in Delhi from the time of its capture by the British forces through the 1870s and the 1880s, when Hindu-Jain and Hindu-Muslim tensions were occasionally manifested in riots, when Wahabi activity briefly surfaced again, verbal duels occurred between Muslim Maulvis and Christian missionaries and some branches of Hindu caste associations were established in the city. The people of Delhi are seen to have been interested in the activities of the Indian National Congress, but not actively involved in it till the early 20th century. The transfer of the capital to Delhi made it politically as well as administratively an important town. The seven years after 1912 were politically a crowded period, which saw the abortive attempt to assassinate Viceroy Hardinge, the controversy over the Rakabganj Gurdwara, the Khilafat movement, the activities of the Home Rule Leagues and the Rowlatt satyagraha. The episodes of the last 10 years are treated in relatively greater detail and many interesting facts come to light, some examples of which are the following: the Swadeshi movement and the boycott of the local Tramways Company; the local apathy on the question of separate electorates in 1909; the links between the secret societies in Delhi and those of Lahore and Bengal. The reviewer came across an interesting detail about the potitical activity of Miss G'meiner, the first principal of Indraprastha College: her participation in the Home Rule movement led to the government withdrawing financial aid from the institution and apparently a rumour was circulated slandering the morality of students in order that their parents might withdraw them from the college.

The wealth of detail provided by this book inevitably opens up many questions that further research alone might throw light on. We still know only about the leaders, Amir Chand, Har Dayal, Mohammed Ali, Syed Hyder Raza and the others. What was the nature and degree of politicization in St. Stephen's, Hindu and Ramjas colleges? Did the different Hindu castes react differently to the propaganda of the Congress and the Khilafat movement? How did the merchants of Delhi, one of the most important entrepôts in the European piece-goods trade, react to the Swadeshi movement? Was political participation greater in the walled city or in the suburbs? What repercussions did national political issues have on municipal politics? After 1912 were the new immigrants politically more alive than the old established families? What was the city's political hinterland? Was it politically closer to Panjab or to the United Provinces?

There was once a Deputy Commissioner in Delhi who spoke sombrely of the "criminal and dangerous classes" in the city, who had been in evidence during Nadir Shah's invasion. the rising of 1857, the sweepers' strike and grain riots. Many Indian historians in like manner tend to see the "freedom movement" in any demonstration at any time directed against British officials and often in any disturbance of the peace at all. The best way to approach such books is to ignore their title and read them for the pleasure of imbibing effortlessly all the details about innumerable episodes which are buried in the innumerable files of the innumerable departments in the dark unfathomed caves of the National Archives of India, compiled with antiquarian assiduity. The book under review is more a history of the "freedom movement" at Delhi than in Delhi. There are detailed accounts of durbars (down to the timbre of people's voices and the colour of regimental ribbons), of meetings convened by various political organizations (down to the times of the arrival of delegates by trains), of the Hardinge bomb episode (down to the colour of the alleged conspirator's shawl). There are many sections which are summaries of what was happening in a particular period in British India generally. These appear to be quite unnecessary. Most of the facts are well-known and they clog the narrative, for they make the reader tend to assume that Indian trends were being mirrored in Delhi, when this was often not so. The danger is that one loses sight of the uniqueness of the city of Delhi-a city near to its Mughal and Urdu heritage, where the sense of belonging to the city overarched communal differences, where the commercial prosperity of the late 19th century reached many Muslim traders as well as Hindu bankers and merchants. Admittedly Andrews might have painted too pretty a picture in his Zakaullah of Delhi; but some of the spirit of that book and the period it describes might be recaptured to soften a narrative which is based on the assumption that Hindus and Muslims could coexist only uneasily. In studying periods of mass participation in political activity, like 1919, the value of an approach like that of Ferrell ("The Rowlatt Satyagraha in Delhi" in R. Kumar, ed, Essays on Gandhian Politics, Oxford, 1971) becomes apparent. A Rudé-style analysis can show why the various sections of society in Delhi acted in a particular situation as a homogeneous political unit. To suggest that the perfect study should combine Andrews' evocativeness with Ferrell's analysis and Dr Singh's erudition is of course asking too much. It reminds one of Whistler's comment to Leighton, "If you could draw and I could paint, what a good artist we should be"!

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It is unfortunate that some clichés have found their way into the book. To take only two examples, "...a century of British distrust towards Muslims spelt their ruin and broke them like a reed" (p. 25) and "...thanks to the despatch of Sir Charles Wood..., a new class, having a new conception of life, new values based on Western philosophy and thought, soon raised its head to assume the leadership in Indian society" (p. 34). There are some errors of fact and some questionable points of analysis. "Europeans and Eurasians" were not the major beneficiaries in the redistribution of land in Delhi in 1858 (p. 10). It was some Hindu bankers. There is no evidence for the statement that in the 1860s the Muslims of Delhi were "equally" divided between the Wahabis and the non-Wahabis (p. 11); this was said by the local officials at the time to make out a case for retaining the Jama Masjid under government control. What were the "coarsest methods" used by the missionaries to preach Christianity (p. 43)? It is a distortion to state that the reason for the Commissioner banning the Sarogi procession in 1863 was that "for the propagation of Christianity, it was found necessary that the bonds between Indians and their established forms of religion should be weakened" (p. 46). The Sarogis subsequently secured permission from the Governor-General to hold the Rathjatra; the author states mistakenly that "The Governor-General..., of course, upheld the decision of the Commissioner" (p. 47). The hartal of 1873 is described as "a manifestation of the new orientation of the change in the political consciousness" (p. 49). But hartals had been known in Delhi in the 1840s and in Banares earlier. Why are the Muslims sweepingly described as "less enterprising and intellectually backward" (p. 84)? Is the response to Western education the yardstick to measure intellectual progress? Delhi is described as having "set a bad example of uproar not only to the Panjab, but to all upper India" by the riot of 1886 (p. 90). Is the report of a blimpish Commissioner of such unimpeachable value as to merit verbatim transcription without quotation marks? After describing the cordial relations between Hindus and Muslims in Delhi in 1898 the author suddenly speaks of "inter-communal conflict" which "had its impact in retarding the growth of the influence of the Indian National Congress on the people at Delhi" (p. 93). This point has not been elaborated. Apropos of Tilak's conviction he says that this "infuriated the nationalists at Delhi" (p. 130). The "nationalists" have not been identified and we do not know how many Muslims are included. For the years after 1912 there is the assumption that Delhi had become the "spring centre for political activity" in north India (p. 163), but there are also indications that many people in Delhi were loyal to the British connection. The conclusion one draws is that Delhi had greatness thrust upon her, that there was political activity at Delhi involving some individuals who found the city conveniently located, but that this did not touch the people in the town except in 1919.

There are some printing errors in the text which might be corrected. "Inquest" should be "enquiry" on page 37, "anagram" should be "anachronism" on page 45, "economic" should read "economical" on page 62, "on the wave" should be changed to "on the wane" on page 100, "political stratosphere" should be "atmosphere" on page 133 and "remonstrative" should read "demonstrative" on page 161. "Slut" and "bitch" may be pejorative terms used interchangeably by male chauvinists, but that does not make "slut" a synonym for a female dog (p. 48). "Drawing to a close" on page 239 should read "drawing close".

Hem Chandra on page 101 is better known as Dr H.C. Sen. There are some obscure turns of pharse. 1857 was "the last kick of the flickering social hierarchy which derived its sustenance from Mughal monarchy" (p. 34); "Panjab was literally running to a riot" (p. 91); "The agitation over the (gurdwara) wall had an...exhilarating effect on the... enervating nerves of the Sikh community" (p. 215); "large crowds of promiscuous creeds" (p. 270). To define a "mohulla" as "corresponding to an English square" (p. 319) assumes a degree of Victorian orderliness about Indian town-planning which did not exist and misses the essence of the word, which connotes not so much a geographical unit as a sense of community completely alien to the families inhabiting the houses in an English square, each barricaded behind its high doorstep and neat window curtain. "Ulema", defined as "most learned man or woman" (p. 321) is the plural form of the word alim.

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NARAYANI GUPTA

MANORANJAN JHA, Civil Disobedience and After: The American Reaction to Political Developments in India during 1930-1935 (Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1973), Pp. xii+300. Price not stated.

In the past 25 years a number of American and Indian scholars have described in learned articles, Ph.D. dissertations and books the several aspects of Indo-American relations—cultural and literary sympathies, missionary and educational work, commercial and political contacts and American support to the Indian struggle for liberty, in the period before 1947. Their abundant findings await a historian who will care to digest them and produce for the benefit of readers with general interest in the subject a comprehensive survey of Indo-American relations up to Indian independence.

Regarding Indo-American political sympathies, it can well be said that of the movements for self-rule and independence in several parts of the British empire, next to the Canadian and the Irish, it was probably the Indian national movement which excited most the curiosity and sympathy of the American people. When precisely did this sympathy, which Indian nationalists regarded valuable, rise to some significant point of intensity in expression?

Dr Manoranjan Jha has described in this book the most intense period in American popular, as distinct from official, reaction, sympathy and criticism vis-à-vis political developments in British India. This period was precisely 1930, as one may conclude from the considerable material presented by Dr Jha in the work under review.

In the 19th century and after three groups in America, those connected with Christian missions abroad, Asian commerce and Oriental studies and religion, were interested in India and Indians; many of them were friendly towards Indians. But till about 1920 few Americans raised their voice in support of self-rule for India. In 1920 and 1921 some members of the US Congress tried to bring the India question before the House of Representatives and its committees. By 1922 William Randolph Hearst, the owner of the

Hearst chain of 30 dailies, was advocating in earnest India's right to liberty. In a signed article in the Washington Times he asked:

On what basis of justice, or general good will, or public benefit, or individual advantage, or liberty, or democracy, or self-determination, or anything that is recognized as right, is India kept in bondage by England (p. 25)?

Many journalists, scholars and other public figures, the Irish groups, the Jewish and other minority religious groups, the pacifists and liberals and many common Americans with faith in the historic destiny of liberty in more than one country swelled the number of friends of India in the United States in the 1920s.

Who but Gandhi could win for the Indian cause such varied, powerful and numerous friends in America and other countries including Britain? Gandhi never visited the United States; this was a big lapse on his part, one may imagine. But distance might well have contributed to the spread of the Gandhi legend outside India. In the 1920s, with the advent of Gandhi, it was clear to many Indian and foreign observers that the entire moral dimension and political scope of the Indian nationalist movement were changing rapidly. This was noticed early by the United States consuls in India, who, under a war-time instruction from the State Department dated 18 April 1918, were required to report "promptly and frequently all political developments in India" (p. 19). In a report of 25 February 1920 from Calcutta American Consul-General Weddell described Gandhi as the leader who could claim at that time to be "the authentic voice of India" (p. 23). Next year in a letter of 10 August 1921 American Consul Hathaway wrote from Bombay to U. Grant-Smith, the American Commissioner in Budapest:

What he [Gandhi] attacks in my judgement is not the British as British but the spirit of European civilization. It is this that makes his movement hard to gauge. He is calling the people of India to renovate their soul to become self-respecting so that others must respect them, i.e. he is preaching a moral regeneration (p. 24).

The year 1930 was full of Gandhi in Indian news. As the author tells us: "to the average American, Gandhi was India" (p. 278). Again, in the period under study (1930-5) the American interest in India was at its "highest point during the salt satyagraha led by Gandhi in 1930" (p. 277). The reports of the Dandi march of Gandhi and his chosen 79 to deliver his countrymen from the habitual fear of British police, laws and jails were followed by many reports of lathi charges made by the police to break up mass demonstrations led by salt satyagrahis at various places. If in the past Americans at Boston had asserted their right to cheap tea and to freedom from taxation without representation with good consequences for mankind, why in 1930 should Americans not sympathize with the Indian nationalist cry that their poor countrymen, particularly those living near the sea, had the natural right to make salt and eat their home-made salt, an element more essential to human life than any kind of fragrant leaves? How good was the Pax Britannica, if it did not follow a humane policy regarding such matters as the salt the native in India must eat?

The discipline of the satyagrahis in 1930 in leading mass agitation in defiance of the police lathi showed at its practical best the *ahimsa* creed in politics. Dr Jha quotes the following excerpt from an eye-witness account of 2,500 Congress party volunteers trying to occupy the Dharsana Salt Depot on 21 May 1930:

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In 18 years of reporting in 22 countries, during which I have witnessed innumerable civil disturbances, riots, street fights, and rebellions, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharsana. The western mind can grasp violence returned by violence, can understand a fight, but is, I found, perplexed and baffled by the sight of men advancing coldly and deliberately and submitting to beating without attempting defense. Sometimes the scenes were so painful that I had to turn away momentarily.

One surprising feature was the discipline of the volunteers. It seemed they were thoroughly imbued with Gandhi's non-violence creed, and the leaders constantly stood in front of the ranks imploring them to remember that Gandhi's soul was with them (pp. 114-5).

This is from a despatch from Webb Miller, European newsmanager of the United Press, sent by ordinary mail from India to evade censor. Miller's account of the police beatings at Dharsana appeared in 1,350 newspapers served by the United Press throughout the world; it was printed in leaflet by the Indian residents in America, of which more than a quarter of a million copies were distributed. Among the other eye-witness accounts of police beatings were those sent by Negley Farson of the Chicago Daily News and by Charles Dailey of the Chicago Tribune, noticed and partly quoted by the author, which did much to arouse the indignation of the American people at the British method of dealing with the salt satyagraha.

From 1931 onwards, with 27,000 satyagrahis in jail, the news from India became less picturesque. The disunity shown by the Indian leaders at the Round Table conferences of 1930 and 1931 reduced the stock of the Indian nationalists in America. The Great Depression was another cause of the ebb from 1931 in popular curiosity about political developments in India. Gandhi was often in and out of jail till in 1934 he suspended the Civil Disobedience movement and concentrated more on his campaign for the rights of the Harijans. While the work of the Indian constitution-making proceeded in England, in India the governor-general maintained the repressive ordinances and refused to have a conference with Gandhi. As the December 1934 issue of the Review of Reviews observed:

Things move slowly in the Orient, far removed from the frantic strivings of the restless West. But Gandhi, apostle of leisurely non-cooperation, can afford to wait. His Indian Nationalists carry on their campaign in a country of 360 millions, awaiting the conciliatory British Labor Party's return to power which may be expected by 1936 (p. 247).

The book embodies probably most of the substance of information and quotable American statements on the events and trends in the nationalist movement in India from 1930 to 1935 which a researcher may hope to find for himself after long labour in wading through the relevant files of the US archives, American newspapers and journals and other published and unpublished material on the subject available in the United States. It will be of much use to such future historians as may attempt to write comprehensive accounts of the nationalist movement in India in the 20th century in the broad perspective of the world-wide progress of liberal humane sympathies between nations in modern times and

will draw the attention of Indian readers to a distinguishing feature of American civilization, its capacity for moral enthusiasm in politics at the popular level.

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BHUPEN QANUNGO

D. P. SINGH, American Attitude towards Indian Nationalist Movement (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1974) Pp. xiv+362. Rs 55.00.

Dr Singh's work is a very welcome addition to the growing corpus of scholarly writings on Indian nationalist movement in general and on American response to it in particular. As is expected of a research monograph prepared for the Ph.D. degree of an American university, it is based mainly on the despatches of the US consular officials in India, the US Congressional records and American newspapers not available to scholars in India. Here one finds a detailed account of the information and assessment the Americans had of the Indian national movement between 1905 and 1929 and of the struggle the Indian nationalists waged in the US for their country's independence in those years.

If, however, by attitude one means a pattern of behaviour or mode of thinking one does not find anything like this in the United States. Probably it was just not there in those days. The book is essentially a compendium of the information sent and opinion expressed by the US officials in India and should have been more appropriately titled American Views on Indian National Movement.

Besides, the work is so replete with references to reports that one often misses the wood among the trees and gropes in vain to discover a pattern in or the rationale behind the opinion different sections of Americans had about India and the so-called policy of the US Administration to refrain from making any anti-British pronouncement in regard to India. In fact it would have been better for the average reader if the author had explained the reasons behind Theodore Roosevelt's support for British rule in India, the so-called "large policy" (p. 83) and the factors that influenced the different opinions on India at different times. This is particularly true of chapter IV, where the Indian nationalist activities in the USA from 1905 to 1919 could have been properly classified under two heads, those of the Indian students and their Irish patrons in New York and the nearby towns and those of the Indian immigrants on the Pacific coast. The relation of tension between the Indian committee in Berlin and the Ghadar leaders, the in-fighting among the latter and the organized efforts that were made on American soil to assail British rule in India deserved a better treatment. For that one should have made use of primary sources like the records of the Home (Political) Department of the Government of India and of the Hindu conspiracy case (1917-8), the latter being available in the US. Valuable relevant information could also be found in this reviewer's Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, Albrecht von Bernstorff's My Three Years in America, Gurdit Singh's Komagatamaru, Lajpat Rai's Autobiographical Writings (ed, V.C. Joshi) and E.V. Voska and W. Irwin's Spy and Counter Spy.

One also wonders whether it was not possible for the author to make use of the reports and private correspondence of American evangelists in this country. The teachers and employers of the Indians in the US must have had their own opinion about the Indian nationalist movement, which should not have been ignored.

A few mistakes of omission and commission find their way into even the best monographs and this one is not free from these. Basing his judgement solely on consular despatches, the author speaks eloquently of the impact of the boycott movement in Bengal (pp. 40, 79). But the papers of the Board of Trade reveal that imports of even foreign textiles picked up after a slight recession in 1906. After all the boycott movement was popular only among the high caste Hindus of Bengal.

The author should have been a little more careful in the use of proper names and in explaining their identity. Thus he speaks of Rashbehari Bose (p. 59), while actually he means the celebrated lawyer, Rashbehari Ghose. Budawa Singh (p. 162) was actually Buddha Singh and the pre-metamorphic name of Manabendra Nath Roy (p. 241) was Narendra Nath Bhattacharya. Sarkar referred to on page 167, footnote 2, is Dhirendra and not Birendra and Jadugopal Mukherjee (p. 172) was never in the US, although his brother Dhangopal became a popular writer there. In that very page the author speaks of one Pulin Behari Bose, but does not take the trouble of explaining that it was an alias of Miss Agnes Smedley. Similarly he refers to one A.C. Banerjee (p. 40), but leaves the reader in dark about who and what he was. Moreover, it is not correct to say that Har Dayal escaped to Switzerland from the US en route Germany (p. 149). Actually he was never an admirer of militarist Germany and had gone to Turkey from Geneva in the autumn of 1914. It was only at Maulvi Barakatullah's request that he came to Berlin on 27 January 1915. The most important person behind the war-time Indian movement in Germany was Virendranath Chattopadhyay, a brother of Mrs Sarojini Naidu, and not Champak Raman Pillai and others mentioned on page 152. H.L. Gupta reached Japan in September 1915 and it was on 28 November and not within 48 hours of his arrival that he was ordered to quit by 2 December. Similarly Abdul Hafiz was in Germany for the major part of the war and spent some time in Turkey. So it is most unlikely that he ever went to the Far East (p. 161). Nor was the Malay peninsula an important theatre of Indian revolutionary activities during the first World War. In fact a good research monograph should never attach undue importance to popular, though useful, books like those of R. C. Majumdar, Krishnalal Sridharani and George Macmunn which have often been referred to in this work. Similarly one should depend on US consular despatches from India for how they viewed the developments here, but not to ascertain what actually happened in India or in the US.

The undoubted worth of this work, however, cannot be questioned. The author has broken new ground, used hitherto untapped sources and conclusively proved that the American interest in India during the second World War was no sudden spurt but the culmination of a fairly long process.

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KAPILESHWAR LABH, *India and Bhutan* (Sindhu Publications, New Delhi, 1974). Pp. viii+276. Rs 45.00.

Sikkim and Bhutan, traditionally the "Lands of the Thunderbolt", have never failed to excite the liveliest imagination and not only of the so-called inquisitive westerner. A Shangri-la atmosphere, of mystery, of a tragi-comic make-believe, of strange things relating to men and affairs, enshrouds these countries even today. Lately, however, much of the mystique has worn thin and these enchanted lands of lamas and snows have been revealed for what they truly are: geographically fascinating, historically challenging and culturally a rich treasure-trove—almost unsullied by the hurly-burly of what goes by the term modernization. In the dull, dreary world of the economists they are categorized as under-developed (more euphemistically "developing"), lagging way behind in the exploitation of their mineral, forest and even human wealth.

Dr Labh's study which grew out of a doctoral dissertation provides an interesting account of how Bhutan emerged from its first contacts with the John Company in the last quarter of the 18th century, through its traumatic experience with the British "missions" of the 19th, to some sort of a viable relationship in the wake of the Younghusband expedition to Lhasa in 1904. He brings the narrative almost to date, barely missing to record the coronation, a few months earlier, of Singhe Wangchuk, the present Druk Gyalpo.

In terms of the large canvas it covers, this is a comprehensive study. Two facets none the less are very striking. There is a singular thinness of material woven into a long and repetitious narrative. It is necessary to underline that the entire period hangs essentially around the missions of Pemberton (1838) and Eden (1864) and their logical culminating point, the treaty of 1910. The years up to 1947 and beyond do not record any event of historic significance apart from the efforts of a stray traveller here or a lone botanist there to gain admittance. True, there is the treaty of 1949 which, as of date, governs relations between New Delhi and Bhutan or the latter's admission to the United Nations in 1971. It may, however, be conceded that the treaty of 1949 has a striking resemblance to that of 1910. Another major lacuna is the absence of a detailed analysis of Bhutan's place on India's landward periphery with particular reference to, to borrow Peking's terminology, "China's Tibet". Understandably the author has dilated at places on the Indian viewpoint neglecting, well-nigh completely, the Chinese end. For a proper perspective it would help if this imbalance were corrected.

It may perhaps bear mention that to talk of China as a "geographical expression" (p. 189) in the aftermath of the 1911 revolution is, apart from being inept, historically incorrect. Again, to suggest that the British were, after 1905, planning to reduce Bhutan to the position of a "native" state (p. 193) is far-fetched; the fact of the treaty of 1910 is evidence enough to repudiate this. One wishes that were all, but Dr Labh states:

. ...Bhutan would have agreed to join the federal union of India under the Government of India Act of 1935, if the British had advised it to do so (p. 200).

One wonders on what authority—and the statement is unsubstantiated—does the author base this assertion. The stark truth is that the British were scrupulous to a degree and the Bhutanese extremely cagey, if only because of geographic compulsions and the

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hypersensitive nature of Bhutan's relations with China and Tibet. They respected Bhutan's special position. Nor has New Delhi, since independence, behaved in any different manner. This is the correct approach; it subserves India's best interests, as indeed those of Bhutan.

A few minor points. A useful entry for the bibliography (which oddly is listed among the "Appendices") and one which may be recommended without hesitation is Nari Rustomji's The Enchanted Frontiers (Oxford, 1971). It provides a fascinating, extremely readable and, Rustomji's modesty notwithstanding, useful corrective to many a British account. Three hitherto unpublished doctoral theses on the subject may be a great help: S. S. Gupta's at Allahabad (1942), A. B. Mazumdar's at North Bengal (1971) and Manorama Kohli's at the Panjabi University, Patiala (1973). Some relevant research articles (three by the present reviewer) have also escaped the author's notice. Again, there are no maps and almost no proof reading. It is a pity that spelling errors are endemic; horror of horrors even Chairman Mao's name is not rendered correctly (p. 208) and Taklakot has two versions separated by a line (p. 189). These, however, are small blemishes and one hates to carp. Dr Labh's is a useful, pioneering effort.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

## A NOTE ON R. S. SHARMA'S IDEAS ON INDIAN FEUDALISM

The following note focuses on some of the issues raised by Professor R. S. Sharma in his articles "Problem of Transition from Ancient to Medieval in Indian History" (pp. 1-9) and "Methods and Problems of the Study of Feudalism in Early Medieval India" (pp. 81-4) in *The Indian Historical Review*, i, no. 1 (March 1974).

Professor Sharma's discussion of feudalism in India raises more problems than it solves. The emergence of landed intermediaries is supposed to be a very important factor behind the rise of feudalism in India. According to Professor Sharma the existence of landed intermediaries is the essence of feudal order. It is clear that it was mainly due to religion that landed intermediaries were created in Indian society. Thus in the rise of feudalism in India religious values played a dominant role and the author has taken due note of it. But rise of feudalism and feudalism per se are two distinct phases. While the discussion of the first phase indicates the significance of religion as a determinant variable, one wonders as to why and how it (religion) has been completely ignored in the discussion of the second phase. Religion has been an integral dimension of Indian social life and any attempt to characterize the feudal order without incorporating religious aspects may just be misleading.

Professor Sharma's observation that "In a broader sense I consider the existence of landed intermediaries to be the essence of a feudal order which flourishes in an agrarian economy buttressed by the decline of trade and shortage of money" ("Methods and Problems of the Study of Feudalism in Early Medieval India", The Indian Historical Review, i, no. 1, March 1974, 81) suggests that the structure of feudal order in India can be explained by one positive and two negative traits only. This seems to be insufficient. The structure of any social order has to be understood in terms of the elements or the parts that constitute it and the interrelationship among the parts. But Professor Sharma has pointed out to us only one element, that is, the landed intermediaries. The others according to him are negative traits, which cannot be identified as parts of any social order. Hence it is difficult to think of the structure of the feudal order on the basis of one element alone as proposed by the author. Even so the presence of landed intermediaries, absence of money economy and decline in trade are only the economic aspects of feudalism. The other relevant aspects of the feudal order have been neglected in his discussion. For example, the changes that occurred in the social relationship due to landed intermediaries, the characteristic life pattern that emerged in the village, the social institutions that came into being and the dominant attitude pattern that prevailed in society have not been dealt with.

The other issue that his articles raise concerns his thesis on the decline of trade. Unfortunately this is something one cannot accept in a comprehensive model of feudalism in the Indian context. Let us take a counter example. From the 14th century to the 17th century India had a flourishing overseas trade; yet feudalism did exist. Prior to this India's sea trade was extensive. Even during the period of which Professor Sharma talks India retained extensive trade contacts with the outside world. Professor Sharma says that gold ceased to come as the South-East Asian countries learned the art of "cultivation of cotton and sugar" (Ibid. p. 83). But he does not mention two important areas with which India had trade relations. These were the Red Sea and Persian Gulf littorals. The rise of Islam within a span of less than half a century brought these territories under a dominant control and facilitated commercial intercourse. These areas supplied to India, among other things, gold. Professor Maqbul Ahmed in his book *Indo-Arab Relations* has following to say on this:

It is difficult to say anything about the general effects of this trade on the economy of the respective countries as the details of the imports and the exports and the periodic trade figures and balances have not been worked out. But on the basis of the accounts of the Arab writers of this period it may be surmised that the total balance of trade must have been favourable to India. Firstly, gold was used by Indian merchants as means of exchange. Secondly, the volume of India's exports seems to have far exceeded that of the Arab countries to India. Lastly, the goods exported from India were costlier and more valuable than those imported by India (pp. 86-7).

Hence the non-discovery of gold coins at this stage need not lead us to conclude contraction in circulation of money. Therefore, in the Indian context to talk of decline in trade as an integral element in the rise of feudalism does not appear to square up with the available facts. The view that the country was politically fragmented is also not compatible with the facts. True, political polycentrism had become a fact during the centuries following Harsa, but the chief units that emerged, the empires of the Gurjara-Pratihāras, the Rāstrakūtas, the Pālas, etc., were by any standards territorially sufficiently big. This runs counter to the idea of political fragmentation of the country. In this light it is necessary to revise one's opinion that internal trade suffered a setback as barriers grew up. First, in spite of "political fragmentation", the intraregional trade provided sufficiently large markets. Further, geography was against localization of trade. Sindh and Panjab have a river system which permits easy accessibility to the entire region. The Ganga and Yamuna with their supporting river system enable us to sail right up to the Bay of Bengal. "Political fragmentation" cannot entirely shut out interregional mobility. With the emergence of a number of seats of political power, the logical conclusion need not be an appreciable shrinkage of interregional commerce. On the contrary the tendency on the part of local powers should be to expropriate the surplus produced by peasants and craftsmen and to use it for ostentatious consumption. The trade in luxury articles should, therefore, theoretically speaking, receive a fillip. Of course, this view can be revised if strong positive evidence to the contrary is put forth.

Professor Sharma also talks of decline of urban centres. But this seems improbable. "Political fragmentation" of which he talks would inevitably result in the growth

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of a number of seats of political power. A big proportion of the inhabitants of these centres would be non-producing, constituting the administrative functionaries, the court and retinue. These then will bring into being the urban centres. Further, we cannot conceive of a decline in Indian industrial technology during this period, as the ovens extant in the ruins of the Nalanda University certainly show that metallurgy still occupied the attention of the people. For example, the bronzes found at Nalanda and Kurkihar are still considered to be the finest in India.

Professor Sharma's formulations with regard to the linguistic complexion of India in the sixth-seventh centuries raise some interesting points. He writes that "What is more significant is that the Apabhramsa began to differentiate into proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujarati, proto-Marathi, etc." ("Problem of Transition from Ancient to Medieval in Indian History", The Indian Historical Review, i, no. 1, March 1974, 7). The statement implies that before the sixth-seventh centuries Apabhramsa was an undifferentiated and homogeneous speech spoken over a large tract of India. The grammarians and philologists, however, have a different story to tell; they repeatedly mention at least three varieties of Apabhramsa, viz., Nāgarak, Upanāgarak, and Brachāt or Grāmyā in use in this area. And in view of the five or six varieties of Prākrit antedating the stage called Apabhramsa the existence of more varieties of Apabhramsa prior to proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, etc., is a sufficiently plausible hypothesis. Moreover, to maintain that the Apabhramsa was a homogeneous language would imply that the distinct Prakrits were unified into one Apabhramsa, a supposition contrary to what we know of the evolution of the Indo-Aryan languages in India. It follows, therefore, that the Apabhramsa was not undifferentiated; indeed the Apabhramsa need not amount to more than a broad term for a complex of related but distinct varieties of speech in use then.

It is possible to argue that proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, etc., are varieties of Apabhramśa, that they are in fact continuations and developments of various Apabhramśas and that the formulation quoted above simply collapses together the two stages, viz., the stage of differentiated Apabhramśa and the proto-stage of Hindi, Bengali, etc., into one. But this exactly is the point of this note. To stagger the two stages into one (and proto stage is infinitely extensible) is to short-circuit one of the most interesting and challenging research problems in historical linguistics, the problem of fixing the date of the rise of various modern Indo-Aryan languages with reasonable accuracy. No matter how far back in time we push the stage of proto-Hindi, proto-Bengali, etc., we cannot avoid meeting varieties of Apabhramśas and Prākrits.

The cited formulation seeks to establish a close correlation between the process of feudalization and linguistic differentiation in India. Hence the hypothesis of a homogeneous Apabhramsa in the sixth-seventh centuries. That there is a correlation between social changes and linguistic changes is undeniable, but the view that treats linguistic changes as consequences of social and political changes is of questionable validity. This view neglects the processes of change and development specific to languages and fails to distinguish them from the "laws" of social change and development. A theoretical position which subordinates language to society or discards the role of society in language does not deserve

encouragement. The formulation quoted above seems to subordinate language history to social and political history.

The other statement that deserves the attention in this respect is:

Although Sanskrit continued to be used by the ruling class at the higher administrative levels, in keeping with growing paraphernalia and personal vanity of the landed classes their language became verbose and ornate (Ibid).

The "growing paraphernalia" here presumably refer to the origin and growth of new social, political and cultural hierarchies associated with the feudal system; new processes and principles intended to regulate and maintain the interrelationship between different social and other units; new skills, techniques and the behaviour patterns of the individuals in that society. Naturally the language would be called upon to refashion the old or coin afresh new terms of appellation, designation, description—terms expressive or suggestive of new attitudes, viewpoints, philosophies and ideologies. Surely this would not make the language VERBOSE or would it? It is better to call it extension or even enrichment of the language. And then the "personal vanity of the landed classes" in relation to the rise and growth of the ornate style in the sixth-seventh centuries. Between literary styles (even cultural styles) and social structures intervene many variables and the more significant of these variables relate to particular literary traditions, conventional habits of thought and expression, preferred or prevailing notions of propriety and decorum, elegance and aesthetic pleasure—a whole complex of social and aesthetic considerations. The "personal vanity of the landed classes" in the scheme of forces shaping the literary style characteristic of the feudal period should be assigned a minor role. In contrast, the "vanity" of the artists is a little more important in this sphere. Literature can be made to order; vanity of a class can start a fashion, a cult for the time being, but the results are often unartistic and history consigns them soon to the limbo of oblivion. But the Sanskrit literary texts written in ornate style are imperishable; aren't they?

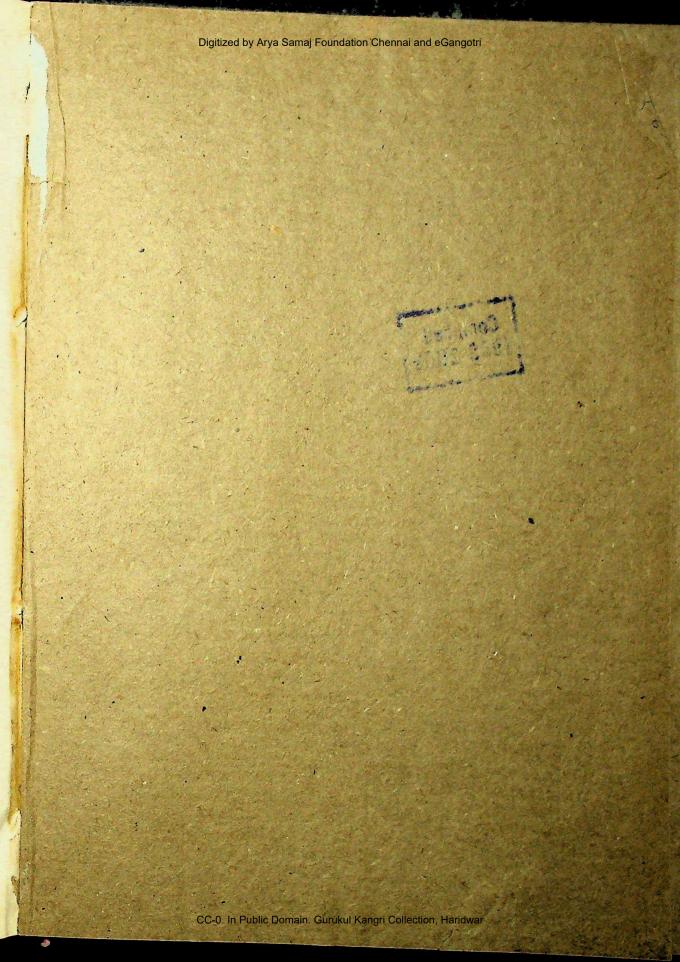
Finally, we would like to thank Professor Sharma sincerely for raising these issues in a series of articles whose range and scope can be measured by the stimulation it provides to the students of several disciplines.

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